

ASPECTS OF  
MAHĀYĀNA BUDDHISM  
AND ITS RELATION TO  
HĪNAYANA



WITH A FOREWORD

BY

**PROF. LOUIS DE LA VALLÉE POUSSIN**

*of the University of Ghent, Belgium*

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MAHĀYĀNA BUDDHISM  
AND ITS RELATION TO  
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BY

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*Thesis (pt. i) approved for the Degree of Doctor of Literature  
in the University of London*





TO  
**DR. NARENDRA NATH LAW**  
THIS HUMBLE TRIBUTE  
OF  
ESTEEM AND FRIENDSHIP









## FOREWORD

MY DEAR FRIEND,

You have done me an honour by requesting me to write a few words by way of Preface for your work on the Hinayāna and Mahāyāna and this request reminds me indeed of the many happy hours passed by us in the study of some Buddhist texts and in the discussion of the innumerable questions, of which your well-meaning curiosity expected to have from me the solutions. Often our learned palabra did not of course yield satisfactory solutions; it drifted on, one śāstra leading us to another; commencing from Hinayāna, we landed in *Vijñaptimātratā* where quite naturally we lost ourselves. While making our way, however, each of us profited by the discussions.

Your aim, rather modest, is to present a clear view of the relations, historical and doctrinal, between the two Vehicles, and your book responds very well to your purpose. In your treatment of the numerous questions interesting in themselves and more interesting by reason of their general significance, you have not omitted to direct your attention to the exposition of the process of ideas, the action of foreign influences, the stages covering some centuries and an extensive region, by which the early form of Buddhism developed into the wonderful efflorescence of beliefs, myths and metaphysics of the Great Vehicle. It will be clear to your readers that the systems of the Great Vehicle are an adaptation of the theories of the Small Vehicle: *prāptis* and *bījas*, *asamskṛtas*, *kāyas*, the *tathatā* itself, the *Sukhāvatī* and the heaven of Maitreya, etc. It is necessary to understand that there was never anything like Protestantism in the history of Buddhism. It is this that you show very well in the course of an examination of an important point.

You have not denied yourself the trouble of giving expositions of the topics on which you have some new observations to make. I wish you had expanded the portion dealing with the history of Buddhism into three or more independent chapters. One can well see from your volume



that the Buddhism of the most ancient sūtras differs from that of the philosophical sūtras; the Buddhism of the Mahā-sāṅghikas is not the Buddhism of the Sarvāstivādins, which again is not identical with that of the Sthaviras; the Mahāyānic tendencies, both doctrinal and religious, are of great antiquity and the Mahāyānic writings refer to aspects of Buddhism very different from one another, *e.g.*, the *Lalitā*, the *Puṇḍarīka*, the *Prajñās*, and the treatises of Asaṅga, not to speak of the *Śraddhotpāda* and such other works, in which the archaic Śākyamuni disappears giving place to the five Jinas. The researches which will give a little of chronology and geography have hardly been begun. Accordingly you do not pretend to write the history of Hīnayāna-Mahāyāna, that is to say, the history of Buddhism.

One of your best chapters, the newest by virtue of both the subject and the method, is that devoted to the *Vinaya* of the Great Vehicle. While reading it I have taken many of your notes and references. You have rectified some errors that have been current for a long time. We know that the Chinese pilgrims noticed long ago that the members of the two Vehicles resided together in a number of convents. The monks,—some adhering to the Great Vehicle and some to the Small, but belonging to the same sect, as also members of different sects within the convent of a particular sect,—lived in excellent harmony performing in unison the ecclesiastical acts, and evidently complying quite closely with the same disciplinary rules. Many European critics, not the less, or the least prudent, have denied it in the name of logic: “The sects have for their basis”, says one of them, “not only traditional formalities but also some canonical writings, and precise doctrines; a sect divided into two *yānas* is therefore almost inconceivable. The statements of this nature found in the accounts of the Chinese pilgrims are due probably to confusion, or point to variations purely local and do not permit one to draw from them a general principle.” All this is not clear; but we know, from the account given by I-tsing, the story of a Buddhist of the Great Vehicle, who had a horror for meat food: his master, of the Small Vehicle, refused him ordination as long as he did not eat the “three



pure (kinds of meat).” This anecdote, so touching, shows where the difficulty lies. The master of Cittavarman saw nothing wrong in the fact that his disciple read books of the Great Vehicle; his sect had undoubtedly definite views about *sarvam asti*, about the inutility of the cult of the Bodhi-sattvas and so forth, but these were problems that did not affect the life of the monks within a convent. The important point is the respect shown to the traditional *Vinaya*. Cittavarman’s master cannot tolerate the scruples about eating which Cittavarman had foolishly learnt from the *Laṅkāvatāra*. In the same way, the king of Koutcha received respectfully Hiouen Tsang despite his Mahāyānism, but he had in mind to persuade him to take pure meat. Nevertheless, Cittavarman was received amongst the convinced and irreconcilable Hīnayānists, but all Hīnayānists were not of this sort and finally the diversities of diet were allowed in the same convent.

In fact, Mahāyāna is sometimes allied to Tāntrism; it has sometimes sanctioned the marriage of monks and the overthrow of the ancient Buddhist institution. It cannot be denied that from the beginning it had a tendency to place the lay-supporters on the side of, if not above, the monks. But you show well that the Mahāyānic disciplinary initiatives at the earliest stage were very modest; the purpose was satisfied by adding a certain number of new rules to the ancient *Vinaya* (the avoidance of meat and so forth) and by increasing the rigour of some precepts. The scale of values is modified; it is believed that the preaching of the Law and service to others are more precious than the exercises which are of personal utility and certain ancient rules, though favourable to Arhatism—“no possession, no anxiety”—were no longer regarded as obligatory. The progress was generally slow but it was pursued without any harm. “The upholders of the more rigorous discipline should not be blamed, the upholders of the less rigorous are also blameless.” Devadatta, the Abbé Tempête of the history of Buddhism, did not play an important rôle in this history. As concerns the doctrines, it cannot be conceived that Vasubandhu on adopting the doctrine of Tathatā had to quit his sect for



entering into a sect of the Mahāyānists. Where are the sects of the Mahāyānists, and by which names should they be known? There are only eighteen sects, all of which were represented in the assemblage of scholars of Nālandā. Can it be doubted that the communities of the Sthaviras practised the cult of relics? However, according to the definite views found in the *Dīgha*, the cult of relics concerns the laity and not the monks, whose endeavour should be exclusively confined to the supermundane.

Your critical *exposé* of the views formerly and lately offered concerning Nirvāṇa is very lucid. It is a problem full of difficulties because it is not easy for unmystical minds to understand a thing which can only be "realised" in trance. Clearly, the Hinayāna denied the existence of any psychological principle outside the Skandhas. Evidently, the Skandhas (which are also named Upadhi) disappear at the death of a saint. Nevertheless, if the (Sautrāntika) author of the *Sūtra* says: "Five things are mere name, viz., things of the past, things of the future, space, Pudgala and Nirvāṇa," the Buddhists, as a rule, admit that Nirvāṇa is bliss; but the saint, when dead, does not touch, seize, possess, realize Nirvāṇa, as he used to do when living. Such is the doctrine of the *Vibhāṣā*. For early Buddhists, the Nirvāṇa was, of course, an immortal state beyond existence and non-existence. The thirst for non-existence is very bad, the aspiration to Nirvāṇa is the very root of salvation and happiness.

In conclusion, I do not wish to omit to point out the diligence with which you have collected the information and discussed the few points with which we are acquainted about the geographical origin of Mahāyāna; and also the interesting results that you have furnished by your study of the *Prajñā-pāramitās*.

It now remains for me to thank you for your desire that my name should be associated with your work.

Yours very sincerely,

LOUIS DE LA VALLÉE POUSSIN

BRUXELLES

5th November, 1929



## PREFACE

The object of this work is to present an exposition of the principal doctrines of Mahāyāna as found in the early Mahāyānic treatises and to show points of agreement and difference between the doctrines of Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna. For the convenience of comparison and for comprehending clearly the gradual changes undergone by the Buddhistic doctrines, I have sometimes placed in a detached way the views as found in the authoritative texts of Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna without attempting to mix them up into a composite whole. The reason for following this method of presentation is that the Buddhist texts are the products of different periods and regions separated sometimes by long distances of time and space and, therefore, they cannot always be expected to fit into one homogeneous whole. It would be obliterating the signposts of development of philosophical or religious thought or its distinctions due to its development in different schools or regions if we treat the views embodied in the different treatises as a composite entity. The views found in every volume of the Buddhist scriptures should be subjected to an examination from this standpoint before they could be mixed up into an amalgam. In these circumstances, it will be helpful to Buddhistic studies, if the facts collected from the various texts be stated accurately but in separate groups so as not to blur in any way the peculiar significance of each group.

The FIRST chapter is meant to help the readers to have a bird's-eye view of Buddhism for about seven centuries. The doctrines dealt with in the second and subsequent chapters belong to this period, though the sources from which the information has been drawn may be later.

The SECOND chapter shows that the Mahāyānists regarded themselves as the true followers of Buddha, and asserted that Buddha had only one form of teaching, the Mahāyāna; but the Hīnayānists being, according to the Mahāyānists, intellectually weak, could not comprehend it thoroughly.



They considered themselves far superior to the Hīnayānists and adduced reasons for this superiority.

The THIRD chapter is divided into four sections. It will be found from the *first* section that according to the *Saddharmapundarīka* and other Mahāyāna texts, the Hīnayāna teaching was only an expedient adopted by Buddha to suit the mental calibre of his early disciples, and that the Hīnayānists were taught only Pudgalaśūnyatā and not Dharmaśūnyatā. It has been shown in the *second* section that the Buddha of the Hīnayānists was really, according to the Mahāyāna view, one of his Nirmāṇakāyas, his two other kāyas being Sambhoga and Dharma. A review of the speculations of Trikāya in the various texts has been given in the section. The *third* section treats of the interpretations of Nirvāṇa. In it the conclusions drawn by scholars from the Piṭaka passages have been reviewed and the expositions of Buddhaghosa, Vasubandhu, Nāgārjuna and others have been summarised and compared. The *fourth* section deals with the four Truths and the Causal Law, the Paramārthasatyas of the Hīnayānists. They are, however, Samvṛtisatyas to the Mahāyānists, whose Paramārtha or Pariniṣpanna-satya is Dharmaśūnyatā or Tathatā.

The FOURTH chapter contains an exposition of the Bodhisattva-bhūmis, showing that the first six bhūmis correspond to the four stages of spiritual progress of the Hīnayānists, and that the last four bhūmis are meant exclusively for bodhisattvas for the comprehension of Dharmaśūnyatā or Dharmasamatā and the acquisition of the extraordinary powers of a Buddha.

It has been shown in the FIFTH chapter that the Mahāyānists depended upon the Hīnayānists for their disciplinary code, adding to it some rules and practices in conformity with their own ideals.

In the APPENDIX an attempt has been made to ascertain the probable time of composition of the *Prajñāpāramitās*.

The difficulty of finding suitable English equivalents of the technical terms of Buddhist philosophy has compelled me at times to use the original Pāli and Sanskrit words without their English renderings. To make these words



easily intelligible, an alphabetical list of same with the English renderings has been given at the end of the book.

A tendency is noticeable in scholars making a special study of a particular branch of Buddhist literature to develop a love for same, leading him to look upon the other branches of the literature with disfavour. This accounts for the lack of sympathy sometimes evinced by a scholar in the field of Hīnayāna towards the subjects pertaining to Mahāyāna. This state of things ought to be removed by a widening of outlook through an extension of the field of study by each scholar so as to embrace the one towards which he is unsympathetic without any good grounds.

In sectarian disputes it is not unusual that one sect should misrepresent the views of the rival sect. As the result of my study of Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna, however, I can state without hesitation that the Buddhist writers are not open to this charge. Uniformly, the Mahāyāna works have represented accurately the position of the Hīnayānists. This can be well corroborated by actual references to the Hīnayāna works in regard to the expositions of particular Hīnayānic views. I have attempted to demonstrate that the Mahāyānists had no personal grudge against the Hīnayānists though, of course, the doctrines of the former differed essentially from those of the latter. The Mahāyānic criticisms of the Hīnayānic doctrines throw a flood of light on points which would have remained obscure if we had to depend on the Hīnayāna works alone. In order to clear up their own position, the Mahāyānists carefully analysed the Hīnayāna doctrines. Hence, instead of obscuring or misrepresenting the position of the Hīnayānists, the Mahāyāna works made substantial contributions towards the elucidation of Hīnayānic doctrines. Hence, to my mind, it is essential that we should utilise both the Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna works in order to arrive at the right conclusions with regard to the Buddhist doctrines.

In conclusion, I want to acknowledge my debts of gratitude to the scholars who have rendered me help in various ways in the preparation of this work. I am thankful to Prof. R. L. Turner, Dr. L. D. Barnett and Dr. N. N. Law, under



whose directions the plan of the book was matured and who did not spare themselves the trouble of going through it to remove its blemishes. The sympathy with which Dr. Barnett used to come to us, the Indian students, in the Oriental Room of the British Museum to furnish us with the pieces of useful information come across by him in the course of his studies and to help us otherwise in our subjects of research will always be a pleasant memory to me. The help derived by me from Prof. Louis de la Vallée Poussin of the University of Ghent proved very fruitful. Little did he realize the services he was rendering to me through the answers to my "queries" which by their nature and number often taxed to the utmost his delicate health. But his genial temper was never ruffled, and the best efforts were made by him to lead me through the maze of technicalities of the Mahāyāna scriptures. It was indeed a pleasure to meet him at Brussels in his cosy study with the master-minds of the Buddhistic age preserved in the numerous volumes nicely arranged all around. He has increased my obligation to him by contributing a Foreword to this volume. My thanks are also due to Prof. Max Walleser of Heidelberg and Dr. E. J. Thomas of Cambridge for giving me facilities for research, the former by placing his whole library at my disposal during my stay at Heidelberg and guiding me to consult the Tibetan and Chinese works, and the latter by enabling me to have access to the rare Buddhist manuscripts deposited in the Cambridge University Library. I also take this opportunity to express my thanks to the Principal of the London School of Oriental Studies, Dr. E. D. Ross, who is always ready to extend his helping hand to the Indian students, and who took much interest in my Tibetan and Chinese studies.

Though this work was written in Europe, I had in India a few sincere friends who helped me in diverse ways in spite of the distance; particularly mentionable among them is Prof. Durgamohan Bhattacharya, M.A., of the Scottish Church College.

Mr. N. C. Barua, M.A., has helped me much by preparing the Index to this work. The way in which a young friend of



mine, Mr. Abani Mohan Chakravarti, has assisted me in making my manuscript ready for the Press merits special mention. As a mere expression of gratitude to Dr. N. N. Law would be inadequate for the help received from him, I take this opportunity to dedicate to him this humble volume.

The acknowledgments of my indebtedness will not be complete unless I express my gratitude to the authorities of the Post-graduate Arts Department of the Calcutta University for the study-leave granted to me for enabling me to prosecute my researches in Europe.

NALINAKSHA DUTT

Calcutta University

*30th July, 1930*









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## CHAPTER I

### A Historical Survey of the Period of Transition from Hīnayāna to Mahāyāna

The history of Buddhism for the first six or seven centuries may be looked upon as covering the following three periods :

A. EARLY OR PURE HINAYĀNA BUDDHISM, preserved mainly in the Pāli Nikāyas and Vinaya, or in the fragments of their Sanskrit versions hitherto discovered.

B. MIXED HINAYĀNA BUDDHISM, represented by the various schools which came into existence about a century after Buddha's death. The sources for this period are scanty, being limited to a few books, either expressly attributed to a particular school, or having sufficient evidence to indicate the school to which the works belong, and also the treatises dealing exclusively with the history of the schools and their doctrines.

C. THE BEGINNING OF MAHĀYĀNA, or as Rosenberg puts it, the period of conflict between Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna.<sup>1</sup> The sources for this period are mainly the *Prajñāpāramitās*, the *Saddharma Puṇḍarīka*, the *Daśabhūmikasūtra*, the *Gaṇḍavyūha*, the *Laṅkāvatāra* as also the works of Nāgārjuna, Aśvaghoṣa, Asaṅga and others so far as they throw light on the relative position of Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna.

#### FIRST PERIOD

(i.e., circa 450 to 350 B. C.)

#### A. EARLY OR PURE HINAYĀNA BUDDHISM

There has already arisen a fairly large amount of literature upon the first period (i.e., the first century after the inception

<sup>1</sup> A similar division was also suggested by Wassiljew in his *Buddhismus*, pp. 38 ff. : Die erste Periode = ein Jahrhundert nach dem Tode des Buddha ; die zweite Periode = die Zeit des Streits ; und die dritte Periode = Mahāyāna.

Rosenberg divides the period a little differently in *Die Probleme der buddhistischen Philosophie*, p. 35 : Die Periode des sogenannten "reinen



of Buddhism), offering us solutions of many problems—a result which has been made possible by the strenuous labours of the Pāli Text Society in regard to the publication of the Pāli canonical texts. By the early or pure Hīnayāna Buddhism, we mean only that form of Buddhism which is presented to us by a considerable portion of the Vinaya and the four Nikāyas.<sup>1</sup> For the present purpose of drawing a rough sketch of the period of transition from Hīnayāna to Mahāyāna we shall state some of the conclusions reached by scholars about the Buddhism of this period in order to ascertain how it changed in course of time and gave rise to the different schools. These conclusions are as follows:—

Hinayana” und seiner verschiedenen Richtungen, d. h. der älteste Buddhismus; die Periode des Entstehens des Mahayana und seines Kampfes mit dem Hinayana; die Periode des Sieges und des Aufblühens des Mahayana. The first two periods of Rosenberg’s division cover our three.

<sup>1</sup> Not all the suttas of all the Nikāyas, because there are many that were incorporated in a later period. The *Khuddaka Nikāya* contains a few early works, but many are of much later date. The *Divyāvadāna* always speaks of four Āgamas, implying that the four Nikāyas or Āgamas were the only recognised canonical texts even at the time of the compilation of the *Divyāvadāna*. See *Divyā.*, pp. 17, 253, 333. Prof. Bapat contends in his article, “The different strata in the literary material of the *Dīgha Nikāya*” in the *Annals of the Bhandarkar Institute* (vol. VIII, pt. i) that the Pāli canon like all other sacred literatures is ‘a mosaic of earlier and later material.’ His view is that the suttas, containing among other things, accounts of miracles, mythological, and metaphysical or Buddhological speculations, are later than those which contain simple teachings of sīla, samādhi, and paññā. It is difficult to agree with some of his conclusions, specially his remarks that the suttas of the first volume of the *Dīgha Nikāya* are earlier than those of the second, and that the suttas of the second are earlier than those of the third, for in the first volume there are suttas like *Kevaddha*, *Ambattha*, containing materials, which, according to his own statement, should be of a later date.

As early as 1911, Prof. Winternitz in his learned review of the translations of the *Dīgha Nikāya* in the *J.R.A.S.* raised this point of the Nikāyas being a mosaic of materials, early and late. He analysed the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* and the *Mahāpadāna-sutta*, and showed the various strata contained in them. Prof. Bapat does not seem to have noticed this review as otherwise he could have seen many other means of testing the different strata. These matters, however, are still far from a complete solution.



1. The spread of Buddhism was confined to a few towns or villages situated in the central belt of India from the east to the west. Of these the more noteworthy are (commencing from the east): Kāśāṅgala, Campā, Rājagaha, Gayā, Kāśi, Nālandā, Pāṭaliputta, Vesālī, Sāvattthi; the dominion of the Licchavis, Vajjis, Videhas, Mallas, Bhaggas, and Koliyas; Kosambi, Sāṅkassa, Ujjeni, Avanti, Madhurā, and Verāñja. There were a few adherents who came from the northern country of Maddaratttha, and two brāhmaṇa villages of Kuru, and also from the southern places like Patitṭhāna. Gandhāra and Takkhasilā were as yet unknown to them.<sup>1</sup>

2. The kings and clans mentioned in them are all pre-Asokan, e.g., Bimbisāra, Ajātasattu, Pasenadi Kosala, and Caṇḍa Pajjota, and the clans like the Bulis, Koliyas, and Vajjis.<sup>2</sup>

3. The place of the laity was not yet well defined. Laymen appeared more as supporters of the Saṅgha than as its actual members. They only revered Buddha and his disciples, heard their teachings, and observed some of the precepts and, on occasions, uttered the formulae of *trīṣarana*—the only mark that distinguished a devotee of Buddha from others. This, however, did not affect their social status, which in India has always been associated with religion, as they continued to be the members of the society to which they belonged.<sup>3</sup>

4. The religion in its full form was meant exclusively for those who would retire from the household life, enter the order of monks, and observe the *Pātimokkha* rules, the observance of which was not possible for a householder. Householders could not observe completely even the ten *sīlas*.

5. The *Pāramitās* were yet unknown. The *Life of Buddha* usually commenced from the time of retirement to the attainment of Bodhi with occasional references to his previous existences, as in the *Mahāgovinda sutta* or the *Mahāsudassana*.

<sup>1</sup> See my *Early History etc.*, pp. 82 ff.; E. J. Thomas, *Life of the Buddha*, Map.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> N. Law, *Studies in Indian History and Culture*, ch. v, "Early Buddhism and the Laity."



*sutta*. The conception of the life of a Bodhisattva performing *pāramis* was hazy, if not unknown.<sup>1</sup>

6. The *Jātakas*, as one of the nine *Āngas*, referred to only some of the stories relating to the previous births of Buddha as found in the *Mahāgovinda*, *Mahāsudassana*, *Makhādeva* and other *Jātakas* traced by Dr. Rhys Davids in the *Nikāyas* and *Vinaya* but they did not appear as yet as a separate collection depicting the Bodhisattva's practice of the *pāramitās*.<sup>2</sup>

7. Buddha was a human being but possessed of omniscience, supernatural powers, and other attainments unattainable by other beings.<sup>3</sup> The appearance of a Buddha is exceedingly rare in the world, only one occurring in several kalpas.

8. The doctrines were confined to the three essentials, *Anicca*, *Dukkha*, and *Anatta*, and the four *Ariyasaccas*, the *Paṭiccasamuppāda*, and the *Atthaṅgika-magga*; practices were limited to the thirty-seven *Bodhipakkhika dhammas*. The practices were usually divided under three heads: *sīla* (moral precept), *samādhi* (mental training), and *paññā* (development of insight and knowledge enabling one to realise the Truth).

9. The goal of life was Arhathood and rarely Paccekabuddhahood, but never Buddhahood. The stages of progress to Arhathood were four, viz., *sotāpanna*, *sakadāgāmi*, *anāgāmi* and *arahatta*.

10. Nibbāna was a state of absolute rest and marked the end of all *kilesas* (afflictions) and hence of all *dukkha*. It was an extremely happy and peaceful (*sānta*, *paṇīta*, *accantasukha*) condition.

## SECOND PERIOD

(i.e., circa 350 to 100 B.C.)

### B. MIXED HĪNAYĀNA BUDDHISM

The history of the events and doctrines of Buddhism of this period—one of the most important periods in its history—is still not fully known; first, because the sources from which the

<sup>1</sup> See *E. R. E.*, II, sv. Bodhisattva.

<sup>2</sup> See *infra.*, pp. 6 f.

<sup>3</sup> See Saunders, *Epochs in Buddhist History*, pp. xviii–xix for a scheme of Buddhology.



reconstruction can be made are scanty,<sup>1</sup> and secondly, because the dates of composition of those that are available have not yet been definitely ascertained. This period witnessed the breaking up of the Buddhist Saṅgha into many sections and the scattering of these sections over the various parts of India, each growing in its own way. Though dissensions in the Church may be undesirable from the orthodox point of view, they were indicative of the great interest taken by the disciples in ascertaining the real teachings of Buddha as also of the attempts to interpret the old teachings in a new way, and to adapt them to the changed circumstances brought about by the advancement of thought for over a century.

#### THE GROWTH OF THE *Abhidhamma* LITERATURE

To keep pace with this movement of thought, the older schools had to gird up their loins in order to make their position strong and unassailable. As the result of this effort, we have the *Abhidhamma* literature of the Theravāda and the Sarvāstivāda schools. The great agreement between the *Nikāyas* (= *Āgamas*)<sup>2</sup> and the *Vinaya*<sup>3</sup> of the Theravāda and the Sarvāstivāda schools, and the great disagreement between their *Abhidhamma*<sup>4</sup> literatures show clearly that while compil-

<sup>1</sup> *E.g.* Sanskrit: *Mahāvastu*, *Lalitavistara*, *Divyāvadāna*, *Avadāna-śataka*, *Aśokāvadāna*, Vasumitra's treatise on the Schools, fragments of the Sanskrit Canon discovered in Eastern Turkestan and the neighbouring regions;

Pāli: *Kathāvatthu*, *Milinda-pañha*, Ceylonese chronicles, *Nikāya-saṅgraha*.

<sup>2</sup> Theravāda: *Suttapiṭaka*: *Dīghanikāya*, *Majjhimanikāya*, *Aṅguttaranikāya*, *Saṃyuttanikāya* and *Khuddakanikāya*.

Sarvāstivāda: *Dirghāgama*, *Madhyamāgama*, *Ekottarāgama* and *Saṃyuktāgama*.

<sup>3</sup> Theravāda: *Vinayapiṭaka*: *Pātimokkha*, *Mahāvagga*, *Cullavagga*, *Suttavibhaṅga* and *Parivāra*.

Sarvāstivāda: *Vinayapiṭaka*: *Vinayavastu*, *Prātimokṣasūtra*, *Vinayavibhāga*, *Vinayakṣudrakavastu* and *Vinaya-uttaragrantha*.

<sup>4</sup> Theravāda: *Abhidhamma*: *Dhammasaṅgaṇi*, *Vibhaṅga*, *Dhātukathā*, *Puggalapaññatti*, *Kathāvatthu*, *Yamaka* and *Paṭṭhāna*.

Sarvāstivāda: *Abhidhamma*: *Saṅgītiparyāya*, *Dhātukāya*, *Prājñaptisāra*, *Dharmaskandha*, *Vijñānakāya* and *Prakaraṇapāda*.

For details see *Early History etc.*, pp. 277 ff.



ing their Nikāyas and the essential parts of the Vinayas, the two schools lived close to each other in Magadha or thereabouts,<sup>1</sup> and utilised a common source,<sup>2</sup> but while compiling their Abhidhammas, they were far from each other and developed the Abhidhamma literatures independently.<sup>3</sup> From the nature of the contents of the *Kathāvatthu* of the Theravādins, it is also evident that the Abhidhammas were developed not only to add strength to their respective views but also to criticise the views of their opponents and establish their own against them. Hence, we can say that this period witnessed not only the appearance of the new schools but also a new development of the older ones.<sup>4</sup>

#### THE APPEARANCE OF THE *Jātakas* AND *Avadānas*

Besides the efforts of the old and the new schools to vie with one another in the field of literature, one notices also a keen competition among them for propagating among the masses the tenets of their respective schools, which, as a matter of fact, resulted in a great measure in the wide propagation of Buddhism.<sup>5</sup> It is a well-known fact that the *Jātakas* and the

<sup>1</sup> i.e., in the first period.

<sup>2</sup> For a comparison of the fragments of Sarvāstivāda Āgamas with the corresponding portions of the Pāli Nikāyas, see Hoernle, *Manuscript Remains etc.*, pp. 30 ff.

For the correspondence, verbal and otherwise, between the *Prātimokṣa-sūtra* of the Sarvāstivādins and the *Pātimokkha* of the Theravādins, see *J.A.*, 1913; see also Lévi, *J.A.*, 1912; Oldenberg, *Z.D.M.G.*, vol. lii; Watanabe, *Tables of Problems in the Saṃyukta Āgama and Saṃyutta Nikāya* (Tokio, 1926).

<sup>3</sup> See *J.P.T.S.*, 1904-5, pp. 60 ff.

<sup>4</sup> An evidence for the later growth of the *Abhidhamma* literature is the orthodox tradition (*Attha.*, pp. 28-32) that Buddha did not preach the *Abhidhamma in extenso* but gave only the *mātikā*, which was later on developed by Sāriputta and handed down by him through his disciples to Revata. This evidence is important in view of the fact that this is a statement made by persons who believe that every thing of the scriptures is Buddhavacana. The rejection of the *Abhidhamma* by the Mahāśāṅghikas as non-canonical is also an evidence in support of our contention. See *Early History etc.*, p. 235. In the *Kośa-vyākhyā* (p. 12) it is stated that the *Abhidharma* was preached in fragments by Buddha.

<sup>5</sup> The inscriptions, which speak of the gifts made to a particular



*Avadānas* were meant for inspiring in the minds of the people a faith in Buddhism and thus popularising the religion.<sup>1</sup> The *Jātakas* were only an afterthought of the Theravādins. They originally did not form part of their scriptures (*Buddhavacana*). The *Jātaka Book*<sup>2</sup> or the floating mass of *Jātakas*, some of which found their way into the famous stone-monuments of India, belongs certainly to an ancient date as is proved by scholars like Rhys Davids, Cunningham, Oldenberg, and Winternitz, but still all of them are not considered to be of the same age as the *Nikāyas*. Rhys Davids' suggestion that the stories found both in the *Nikāyas* (i.e., Suttanta-*Jātakas* of the *Cullaniddesa*) and in the *Jātaka* collection form the oldest type of *Jātaka* stories and may be called pre-*Jātaka* is of great value.<sup>3</sup>

The mention of *Jātakas* among the *Navāṅgas*, a very ancient division of the Buddhist scripture, may lead one to think that the most ancient Buddhists were not without a *Jātaka* literature of their own. This seems plausible at first sight, but it should be remembered that the division of Buddhist scriptures into nine *Āṅgas* does not refer to nine different groups of literature but to nine types of composition to be found in the collections of the ancient Buddhists. In school, add sometimes that the gifts were meant also for the *cāturdiśa saṅghas*, i.e., members of the Buddhist Saṅgha in general.

Compare the *Ava. S.*, p. xxxix (*Kalpadrūmāvadāna*):

Gacchata bhikṣave yūyaṃ sattvānāṃ vinayārthataḥ,  
Deśān pratyabhigacchantāḥ prakāśayata saṃvṛtīm.

(The word *saṃvṛti* in this verse is noteworthy. The Mahāyānists will not admit that the *dharma*s which were mostly propagated by the Hīnayānists at first were anything but the truth in disguise. There is, of course, also the hint that *paramārtha* truth is a matter for realisation and cannot be the subject of preaching.)

<sup>1</sup> See Speyer, Preface to the *Ava. S.*, pp. v, vi.

<sup>2</sup> In the *I.H.Q.*, vol. iv, p. 6, Prof. Winternitz draws our attention to the fact that the Mandalay and Phayre Mss. of the *Jātaka-Book* (i.e., Verse-*Jātaka*) have been examined by Dr. Weller and found to be extracts made from the *Jātaka* commentary. He, however, still cherishes the view that there was a canonical *Jātaka-Book* and that it was in verses.

<sup>3</sup> *Buddhist India*, pp. 190 f.; Mr. G. D. De (*Cal. Rev.* 1929-30) however shows that versions of some of the Suttanta-*Jātakas* are posterior to the versions of those of the *Jātaka-Aṭṭhakathā*; hence all *Nikāya-Jātakas* are not of the oldest type and cannot be called pre-*Jātaka*.



one Sutta or Suttanta there may be portions which can be called a *sutta*, a *geyya*<sup>1</sup>, a *gāthā*, an *udāna*, a *veyyākaraṇa*, an *abbhutadhamma*, or a *jātaka*. It was long after the navāṅga division was known that the compilations *Udāna*, *Itivuttaka*, and *Jātaka* came into existence. The explanation of navāṅgas as attempted by Buddhaghosa<sup>2</sup> also shows that he did not know any particular sections of literature corresponding to the navāṅgas. It is very interesting to notice in his exposition that for two of the nine aṅgas, viz., *Vedalla* and *Abbhutadhamma*,<sup>3</sup> he could not find any work or group of works which could be classified under these headings and so he named some suttas which came under them. Taking these two as our clue, we may suggest that the other seven of the navāṅgas should also be explained in the same way. Instead of putting the whole Abhidhamma collection under *Veyyākaraṇa*,<sup>4</sup> the Suttas, in which Sāriputta, Mahākaccāyana or Buddha<sup>5</sup> gave detailed expositions of the four truths or the eightfold path, or of any tenet of Buddhism or of any of the pithy sayings of Buddha, should have been included. So also the *Jātaka-Aṅga* does not refer to the 550 *Jātakas* as Buddhaghosa says, but to the few stories found in the *Nikāyas*, in which Buddha refers to incidents in one of his

<sup>1</sup> *Attha.*, p. 26: *Sabbam pi sagāthakam suttaṃ Geyyan ti veditabbam.*

<sup>2</sup> *Sum. Vil.*, pp. 23, 24; *Attha.*, p. 26; *Petavatthu A.*, p. 2.

<sup>3</sup> *Attha.*, p. 26: *Sabbe pi acchariyabbhutadhammapaṭisaṃyuttā suttantaṃ Abbhutadhamman ti veditabbam.* The 'Acchariyabbhutadhamma Sutta' (*Majjhima*, III, pp. 118 f.) may be treated as one of the *Abbhutadhamma* class. For *Abbhutadhamma*, see also *Mtu.*, III, p. 200.

<sup>4</sup> As done in the *Attha.*, pp. 27-28.

<sup>5</sup> The *Mahākaccānabhaddekaratta-sutta* (*Majjhima*, III, No. 133) offers an excellent example of a *sutta* containing *gāthā* and *veyyākaraṇa*. The *Mahākammavibhaṅga-sutta* (*Majjhima*, III, No. 136) is a type of *veyyākaraṇa sutta*.

Buddhaghosa makes himself quite clear in his attempt to establish that the *Kathāvatthu* is as much Buddha-bhāsita as were the *Madhupiṇḍika* and such other Suttas expounded by Mahākaccāna, Āpandā and others. His argument is that Buddha at some places gave only the *mātikā* (substance), which was sometimes explained by Mahākaccāna, and the whole of it was regarded as *Buddhavacana*. Suttas of this type, in my opinion, were meant to be included under *Veyyākaraṇa*-division. See *Attha.*, p. 5.



previous births. *Pūrvānusmṛti* is one of the *abhiññās* (superior knowledge) acquired by the Arhats; so it is quite in keeping with the tenets of early Buddhism to speak of one's previous existences. But the idea of utilising these stories of *Pūrvānusmṛti* as a means of propagation of the religion came later, at least, subsequent by a century and a half to the inception of Buddhism. So it is in the second period of our division that we must place the compilation or composition of the Abhidhamma and the Jātaka literatures.<sup>1</sup>

Like Buddhaghosa, the Mahāyānic expositors attempted to classify their literature according to the twelve āṅgas—a division current among the Sarvāstivādins, the Mahāsāṅghikas and others, placing the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā-Prajñāpāramitā* under *Sūtra*, the *Gaṇḍavyūha*, *Samādhirāja* and *Saddharmapundarīka* under *Vyākaraṇa*, and so forth.<sup>2</sup> But this division of scriptures into twelve Āṅgas was not the work of the Mahāyānists. It had been made by the Sarvāstivādins<sup>3</sup> and the Mahāsāṅghikas and followed by some of the other Hīnayānic schools. The three additional Āṅgas are *Nidāna*, *Avadāna* and *Upadeśa*.<sup>4</sup> Burnouf explains *Nidāna* as those treatises which show the causes antecedent to events, e.g., how Śākyamuni became a Buddha. The cause

<sup>1</sup> In addition to what has been said in connection with the Abhidhamma (see fn. ante, p. 6), it may be pointed out that the Mahāsāṅghikas also rejected the claim of the Theravādins that the Abhidhamma and the Jātakas were canonical. Compare the Yogācāra tradition that in the first part of his life, Buddha preached the four Āgamas, Dharmānusmṛtyupasthāna, *Lalitavistara*, *Karmaśataka* and *Avadānaśataka*. Wassiljew, *Buddhismus*, p. 352. According to the Sarvāstivādins, each of the Abhidharma books had a compiler. Cf. *Kośa-vyākhyā*, p. 12: Śrūyante hi abhidharmaśāstrānām kartārah.

<sup>2</sup> Burnouf, *Intro.*, pp. 51–67; Hodgson, *Notices etc.*, in the *Asiatic Researches*, XVI; Wassiljew, *Buddhismus*, pp. 118 f.

<sup>3</sup> *Kośa*, VI, 29b. Professor La Vallée Poussin drew my attention to the fact that the 12 āṅgas are mentioned in Yaśomitra's *Vyākhyā* and not in the *Kośa* itself.

<sup>4</sup> Taking *Vaipulya*=*Vedalla*, see Kern, *Manual of Buddhism*, p. 7. For a discussion about *Vaipulya*=*Vaitulya*, see *J.R.A.S.*, 1907, pp. 432ff and 1927, pp. 268ff; but cf. Buddhaghosa's interpretation in the *Athha.*, p. 26.



was the completion of the Pāramitās by Buddha and so the treatises, or the portions of treatises, describing the completion of pāramitās are called Nidānas. He also points out that there is no literature which is classified under Nidāna.<sup>1</sup> The explanation of Burnouf is supported by the Nidānakathā of the *Jātakatthavaṇṇanā*. But in the Mahāyāna literature as well as in the *Mahāvastu*, Nidāna signifies the introductory description which sometimes contains, as in the case of the *Mahāvastu*,<sup>2</sup> hints of the topics to be dealt with in the treatise. The description of the preparations made by Buddha, viz., entering into samādhi and putting forth rays of light from the body, the appearance of Buddhas on lotus, and so forth before the preaching of the Prajñāpāramitā, is called Nidāna.<sup>3</sup> In the Tibetan versions of the *Ratnakūṭa-sūtras*, the place where a particular Sūtra was delivered is referred to as Nidāna.<sup>4</sup> Considering the uses of this expression, we may take it as that aṅga (portion) of a treatise, which contains the introductory matters. The sense of the term *Avadāna* is clear and needs no comment. It includes all stories of previous births whether of Buddha or of any of his disciples or of any prominent figure professing the Buddhist faith, and a huge literature has grown under this heading.<sup>5</sup> In the explanation of the term *Upadeśa*, however, there is some obscurity. There is hardly any justification for considering the Buddhist Tantras as coming under the heading Upadeśa, for they had not come into existence when the term Upadeśa came into vogue.<sup>6</sup> It certainly means "instruction" and this is supported by the Tibetan rendering of the term by *bab-par-bstan pahisde*. In one<sup>7</sup> of the Chinese texts it has been explained

<sup>1</sup> Burnouf also points out the technical signification of the term Nidāna as=12 links of the Pratītyasamutpāda. Cf. Nidānasutta in the *Dīgha*.

<sup>2</sup> *Mtu.*, I, pp. 2, 4.

<sup>3</sup> *Pañca.*, p. 17.

<sup>4</sup> M. Lalou's paper in the *J.A.*, 1928.

<sup>5</sup> See Speyer's Intro. to the *Ava. Ś.* The Pāli collection has also an *Apadāna*. It contains accounts of the previous lives of Arhats.

<sup>6</sup> Burnouf, *op. cit.*, pp. 55-6; *As. Res.*, XVI, p. 427; Wassiljew, *op. cit.*, p. 119: "die Upadesas eine analytische Untersuchung der Lehre."

<sup>7</sup> On 12 Aṅgas, see Nanjio's *Catalogue*, No. 1199 (Taisho ed. of the *Tripitaka*, vol. 31, p. 586).



as those discourses which contain expositions of the profound and mysterious dharmas. That the term later on bore this sense is also apparent from the fact that the *Abhisamayālaṅkārikā* is sometimes called *Prajñāpāramitopadeśa-śāstra*.<sup>1</sup>

#### INCORPORATION OF *Pāramis* IN THE DOCTRINES OF THE THERAVĀDINS

One can easily observe the type of literature that was intended for inclusion under at least two of these headings. It consisted more of anecdotes, stories, parables and so forth than of the actual doctrines of Buddhism. They were incorporated into the Buddhist literature in the garb of *Pūrvānusmṛtis*, and the chief object was to popularise Buddhism and to show that they were meant as much for the benefit of the masses as for the selected few who could retire from the world. This is an innovation which the earliest orthodox school, the Theravādins, had to make reluctantly under the pressure of circumstances. Their early literature was ignorant of the *pāramitās*,<sup>2</sup> and much later, when they spoke of *pāramis* it was only to inspire faith in the minds of the people and not to set an example to incite them to fulfil the *pāramis*. The attitude of the Sarvāstivādins and the Mahāsāṅghikas, however, was different. They did not diminish in the least the extreme difficulty of the task of fulfilling the *pāramitās*, but they did not discourage people from the endeavour. Not only to inspire faith, but also to encourage people in the performance of *dāna*, *śīla*, *kṣānti*, *vīrya*, *dhyāna* and *prajñā*, they invented story after story and associated them not only with the life of Buddha but also with the lives of persons who attained prominence in the history of the Buddhist faith.

The Theravādins, it will be observed, speak of ten *pāramis*,

<sup>1</sup> See my Intro. to the *Pañca*.

<sup>2</sup> The omission of the *Pāramis* in the *Dasuttara* and *Saṅgīti suttantas* of the *Dīgha* is significant. The word '*pāramippatto*' (*Majjhima*, III, p. 28) is sometimes found in the sense of perfection but not in the technical sense of six or ten *pāramis*.



viz., *dāna*, *sīla*, *nekkhamma*, *paññā*, *virīya*, *khanti*, *sacca*, *adhiṭṭhāna*, *mettā*, and *upekkhā*. Throughout the Sanskrit literature, whether Hīnayāna or Mahāyāna, earlier or later, the pāramitās are mentioned as six<sup>1</sup>. It is in the *Daśabhūmika-sūtra*<sup>2</sup> that we first find mention of ten pāramitās, adding the following four to the usual six,—*Upāyakaṣālyā*, *Prāṇidhāna*, *Bala*, and *Jñāna*. If we compare the three lists, it is evident that the conception of six pāramitās was the oldest. The Theravādins added to it *Nekkhamma*, *Sacca*, *Adhiṭṭhāna*, *Mettā*, and *Upekkhā*, and dropped *Dhyāna*. Apparently this list lacks a system,<sup>3</sup> for the last two *Mettā* and *Upekkhā* are the two of the four brahmavihāras and have to be practised by all Arhats to perfection, while *Sacca* may easily be included in *Sīla*. Of the other two, *Adhiṭṭhāna* is to form a resolution (which in the case of Sumedha only was to become a Buddha) and to carry it out at any cost. It corresponds to *Prāṇidhāna* of the Mahāyānists.<sup>4</sup> The *Nekkhamma* pārami, i.e., retirement from the household life, was emphasised by the Theravādins, and, in fact, formed one of the chief features of the doctrines of this school, while it was let alone by the Mahāsāṅghikas and the Sarvāstivādins. The Mahāyānists also gave to *Nekkhamma* a superior place, but they did not make it imperative upon every being to retire in order to derive the benefits of the religion.

One of the main reasons for the differential treatment of the Pāramitās by the three schools is that the Theravādins rejected the idea of any being aspiring to Buddhahood, while the other two regarded the probability of a being becoming Buddha as a very rare event. In the *Divyāvadāna*,<sup>5</sup> we find passages in which it is said that after the delivery of a discourse, some beings were established in the Truth,

<sup>1</sup> *Divyā.*, pp. 95, 127, 490; *Lal. Vis.*, pp. 345, 474; *Sata.*, p. 242.

<sup>2</sup> *Daśa.*, pp. 63, 72, 81, 94. Cf. *Mvyut.* 34.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Prof. La Vallée Poussin's remark in the *E.R.E.*, sv. Bodhisattva.

<sup>4</sup> See *Infra*, ch. IV; for four kinds of *Adhiṭṭhāna*, see *Mvyut.*, 80 and *P.T.S. Dict.*; *Adhiṭṭhāna* in the *Mahāvamsa*, ch. XVII, *śl.* 46.

<sup>5</sup> *Divyā.*, pp. 226, 271, 368, 469, 476, 478, 495, 569.



some in one of the four stages of sanctification, some developed aspiration for the attainment of Śrāvakabodhi or Pratyekabodhi, and some for Anuttarasamyaksambodhi. Remarks like these are significant and show that the Sarvāstivādins, to which school the *Divyāvadāna* belongs,<sup>1</sup> were not as conservative as the Theravādins. The Mahāsāṅghikas, as is well-known, were the first to bring about this change in the angle of vision. They were the precursors of Mahāyāna, and hence, it is hardly necessary to adduce reasons why the practice of Pāramitās should form an integral part of their doctrines. So the introduction and formulation of the Pāramitās were due originally either to the Mahāsāṅghikas or the Sarvāstivādins and were adopted later on in a modified form by the Theravādins.

Closely connected with the Pāramitās are the Jātakas and the Avadānas, and consequently the Bharaut and Sanchi sculptures. All the three schools put forth their best efforts in propaganda, but it is still an open question as to which of the three schools inspired the origin of the famous stone monuments. Attempts have been made by many scholars<sup>2</sup> to identify the sculptural representations of Jātakas, and many have been traced in the *Jātakatthavaṇṇanā*, but still the identifications are not all beyond doubt, and it is not improbable that a better elucidation of these sculptures will be found in the huge literature of Avadānas which are still in manuscript.

#### PROPAGATION

The efforts of the various schools to propagate their particular faith met with success, as is evidenced by the early stone monuments of India. Every school no doubt increased the number of its adherents and we have evidence of this in some of the inscriptions, belonging to a period little later than that with which we are here concerned. These inscriptions are records of gifts made specially to a particular school<sup>3</sup>. But along with these we find some inscriptions in

<sup>1</sup> Csoma Körösi, *As. Res.*, XX; Speyer, *Intro. to the Ava. S.*

<sup>2</sup> Of whom Cunningham, Oldenberg, Barua, Charpentier may be mentioned.

<sup>3</sup> *E.g.* Lüder's *List*, Nos. 1105, 1107.



which no particular sect is mentioned, but gifts are made for the benefit of the saṅgha of the four regions (cāturdiśa saṅgha).<sup>1</sup> This shows clearly that the devotees might have had faith in the tenets of one of the schools but they supported all the schools, i.e., Buddhism in general. As the dates of these inscriptions do not help us much with regard to the period under review, we have to confine ourselves to the scanty evidence yielded by the few works, whose dates of composition might be a little later, but which may be regarded as yielding materials for this period.

We have seen from the Nikāyas that early Buddhism was confined to the central belt of India from Aṅga to Avanti, claiming also a few adherents from the distant countries of the north and the south.<sup>2</sup> The account of the distribution of relics as given in the Mahāparinibbāna Sutta in its Pāli and Tibetan versions<sup>3</sup> gives a fairly correct idea of the spread of Buddhism towards the beginning of the first period. The people who shared the relics were the Licchavis of Vesāli, Sākyas of Kapilavatthu, Bulis of Allakappa, Koliyas of Rāmagāma, Brāhmaṇas of Veṭhadīpa, Mallas of Pāvā and Kusinārā, Moriyas of Pipphalivana, and the people of Magadha. The places mentioned are all in eastern India. The only place mentioned outside the eastern territory is Gandhārapura where a tooth of Buddha is said to have been enshrined.<sup>4</sup> This is, as the commentator points out, a later addition; in any case, the people of Gandhārapura did not share in the relics. A further hint about the spread of Buddhism in the first period is furnished by the boundaries of the Maṅgala-jaṇapada as given in the *Mahāvagga* of the *Vinaya*.<sup>5</sup> The boundaries are as follows: Kaṇṇagala nigama in the east, next to the Mahāsālā forest, the river Sallavatī on the south-east, Setakannika nigama on the south, Thūna brāhmaṇagāma on the west and Usīra pabbata on the north. According to this account, Avanti-

<sup>1</sup> E.g. Lüder's *List*, Nos. 1099, 1107.

<sup>2</sup> See for details, *Early History*, etc., pp. 92, 137ff., 155, 169ff.; Dr. E. J. Thomas, *Life of the Buddha*, Map.

<sup>3</sup> *Dīgha*, II, p. 167; *As. Res.*, XX, p. 316.      <sup>4</sup> *Dīgha*, II, p. 167.

<sup>5</sup> *Mv.*, I, p. 197; *Jāt.*, I, 49; *Divyā.*, p. 21.



dakkhiṇāpatha is a paccantima-jaṇapada (border country)<sup>1</sup> and so also the country in the east beyond Kaṇḍakā, which is identified with Bhagalpur.<sup>2</sup> The *Divyāvadāna*<sup>3</sup> preserves this tradition replacing only the eastern boundary Kaṇḍakā by Puṇḍravardhana. If Puṇḍravardhana be identified with a place in North Bengal, the *Divyāvadāna* shows a slight extension of the eastern boundary. The only other name in this account that deserves attention is the Usīradhaja of the *Mahāvagga* and Usīragiri of the *Divyāvadāna*. We know of an Usira mountain situated near Mathura,<sup>4</sup> and Tāranātha also tells us that Upagupta, the famous monk of Mathura and preceptor, according to the Sarvāstivāda tradition, of Aśoka, lived there for three years before going to Kashmir after leaving Vārāṇasī.<sup>5</sup> So it is apparent that Mathura, a stronghold of the Sarvāstivādins, was included in the Majjhima-jaṇapada.

From the accounts of the Vesāli Council also, as given in the *Cullavagga*<sup>6</sup> and in the *Vinayas* of the Sarvāstivāda and Dharmagupta schools, it seems that the horizon of Buddhism, even at the beginning of the second century after the rise of Buddhism, did not extend far. The geographical information that can be derived from this account is as follows: Yasa, the convener of the orthodox council of Vesāli came from Vesāli to Kosambi, and from Kosambi he sent messengers to the bhikkhus of Pāṭheyya and Avantidakkhiṇāpatha. Sambhūta Sāṇavāsi was at that time living on the Ahogaṅga mountain where assembled the sixty bhikkhus of Pāṭheyya and eighty bhikkhus of Avantidakkhiṇāpatha, all observers of Dhutaṅga precepts. Revata, who lived at Soreyya, pass-

<sup>1</sup> *Mv.*, I, p. 197.

<sup>2</sup> For the identification of the boundaries of the Majjhima-jaṇapada see S. N. Majumdar's Intro. to Cunningham's *Geography*, p. xliii.

<sup>3</sup> *Divyā.*, p. 21: Puṇḍravardhana on the east; Sarāvatī on the south; Sthūṇopasthūṇaka brāhmaṇagrāmas on the west; and Usīragiri on the north.

<sup>4</sup> Watters' *Yuan Chwang*, I, p. 308.

<sup>5</sup> *Tāra.*, pp. 10, 13.

<sup>6</sup> *Cv.*, XII, i, 7f. See *Ind. Ant.*, 1908, *Councils, etc.*; *Pag Sam Jon Zang*, p. viii; for the Mahiśāsaka tradition, see Wassiljew's notes in the App. to *Tāra.*, pp. 289-290.



ing through Saṅkassa, Kaṇṇakujja, Udumbara and Aggalapura, came to Sahaḥāti. Saḥa of Sahaḥāti found after deliberation that the Pāṭheyyaka bhikkhus were right, while the Pācīnaka bhikkhus were wrong. For the settlement of the disputed questions was formed a committee on which Sabbakāmi, Saḥa, Khujjasobhita and Vāsabhagāmika represented the Pācīnakas, and Revata, Sambhūta Sāṇavāsi, Yasa, and Sumana represented the Pāṭheyyakas. An important fact that should be noticed in this account is the division of monks into two sections, the Pācīnakas and the Pāṭheyyakas. The Pācīnakas indicated the easterners, of whom the Vesālians were the foremost; to this section belonged Sabbakāmi,<sup>1</sup> a disciple of Ānanda, and Saḥa, a distinguished monk of Sahaḥāti. The Pāṭheyyakas were the monks dwelling in Kosambi, Pāṭheyya and Avantidakkhiṇāpatha; to this section belonged Sambhūta Sāṇavāsi, an important figure in the traditions of both the Theravādins and the Sarvāstivādins, also Revata, an old bhikkhu of Soreyya, and Yasa, famous in connection with the Second Council.<sup>2</sup>

#### TRADITIONS OF *Ācariyaparamparā*

The traditions of the second council as preserved by the Theravādins and the Sarvāstivādins are the same,<sup>3</sup> and as far as the succession of monks is concerned, there is also no disagreement. The Theravādins only refer to Sambhūta Sāṇavāsi as a member of the committee of the second council, while the Sarvāstivādins speak of him as the patriarch who succeeded Ānanda. The two traditions bifurcate after the second council, one speaking of the Asokan Council under the leadership of Moggaliputta Tissa, while the other ignores it, speaking of Upagupta as the religious adviser of Asoka, and dwelling at length on the Kaniskan Council at Jalandhara instead of the Asokan Council. This

<sup>1</sup> According to the *Cv.* (xii, 21) he was then ordained 120 years, i.e., he must have been more than 140 years old. *Pag Sam Jon Zang* (p. 81) refers to his taking part in the Second Council, which was held, according to it, under the auspices of Mahāpadma Nanda.

<sup>2</sup> For details, see *I.A.*, 1908.

<sup>3</sup> *I.A.*, 1908, pp. 4 ff; 89 ff.



divergence of tradition is significant, and henceforth the history of Buddhism is no longer the history of one form of Buddhism but of many, principally of the three schools, Theravāda, Sarvāstivāda, and Mahāsāṅghika.<sup>1</sup> The Theravāda is pre-eminently a Vinaya school,<sup>2</sup> and though the Tibetan tradition ascribes to Kaccāyana its leadership,<sup>3</sup> we may notice that Upāli as the compiler of the Vinaya was highly venerated by the Theravādins, and his connection with the Asokan Council is established through his disciples. It should be observed that though the Theravādins speak of the line of disciples (*ācariyaparamparā*) from Upāli or Sāriputta, there is no idea of patriarchal succession. In the *Majjhima Nikāya*<sup>4</sup> it is expressly stated that in the Buddhist Saṅgha there is no recognised head. The Tibetan and Chinese traditions have, in fact, given currency to the idea of patriarchal succession. The *Atthasālinī* also gives us a list of ācariyas of the Abhidhammikas, tracing it from Sāriputta, which, however, is not worth credence.<sup>5</sup> The traditions of the Theravādins and the Sarvāstivādins about the ācariyaparamparā of the first two centuries may be combined thus:—

<sup>1</sup> Tāranātha (p. 44) refers also to Sthavira Vatsa who introduced the Ātmaka theory. He adds that Dhītika, who succeeded Upagupta, convened a council in the Puskariṇī vihāra (of Maru Land) to suppress the Ātmaka theory of Vatsa and succeeded to convince the followers of Vatsa and, ultimately, the teacher himself of the untenability of the theory. This legend evidently refers to the Vātsīputriyas or the Vajjiputtakas, from whom sprang the Sāmmitīyas who attained prominence during the rule of Harṣavardhana. See *Early History etc.*, pp. 297 ff.

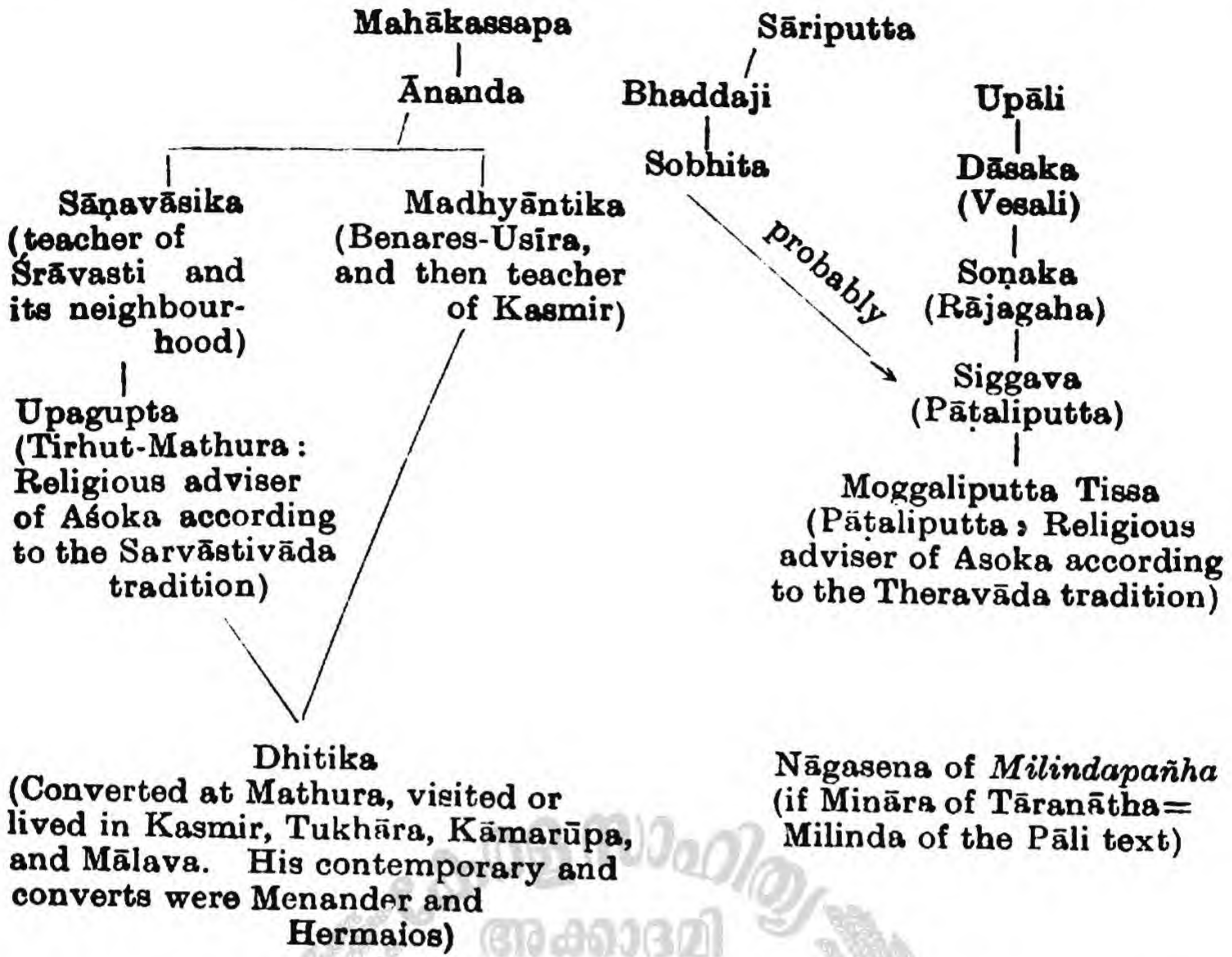
<sup>2</sup> *Early History etc.*, p. 211; Watters, *Yuan Chwang*, I, p. 302 referring to the Vinayists, (i.e., the Theravadins) as worshipping Upāli.

<sup>3</sup> Wassiljew, *op. cit.*, p. 295., Eitel, *Handbook etc.*

<sup>4</sup> *Majjhima*, Sutta 108; see also Dutt, *Early Buddhist Monachism*, pp. 141 f.

<sup>5</sup> *Attha.*, p. 32: Ācariyaparamparā: Sāriputtatthero Bhaddaji Sobhito Piyajāli Piyapālo Piyadassī Kosiyaputto Siggavo Sandeho Moggaliputto Visudatto Dhammiyo Dāsako Sonako Revato ti. (Then in Ceylon) Mahindo Iddhiyo Uttiyo Bhaddanāmo ca Sambalo.





As I have already remarked, we must not take ācariya-paramparā as patriarchal succession, nor should we attempt to calculate the duration of abbotship on the basis of an average period, as is usually done in connection with kings, for the Buddhist saints were generally long-lived, and there was no custom of a disciple succeeding his teacher. Moreover the ordination of disciples could have happened in the earliest or the latest part of a teacher's life. According to Tāranātha, Madhyāntika was ordained by Ānanda shortly before his death;<sup>1</sup> hence it is quite possible that he was a contemporary of both Sāṇavāsi and Upagupta, or of Dāsaka, Soṇaka, Siggava, and Moggaliputta. Reading the tradition in this way, and also observing the names of places, which were the centres of activity of the various bhikkhus, we may say that after the Council of Vesālī, the Sarvāstivādins attained more and more popularity and spread towards the north, having two important centres, one at Mathura with Upagupta as the chief teacher, and the other in Kasmir

<sup>1</sup> *Tāra.*, p. 9.



with Madhyāntika as the chief, the two centres having later on coalesced under the leadership of Dhitika, who, it seems, greatly extended the horizon of influence of the Sarvāstivāda school by pushing it eastward to Kāmarūpa, westward to Mālava, and north-westward to Tukhāra, the realm of Mināra and Imhasa. The Theravādins retained their seat in Magadha all along with a branch at Ujjeni, founded by Mahākaccāyana. Mahinda and Saṅghamittā,<sup>1</sup> it seems, were closely connected with the Ujjeni branch of the Theravāda school and propagated the same in Ceylon.

#### ASOKA'S PART IN THE PROPAGATION OF BUDDHISM

We are yet in the dark about the part played by Asoka in the propagation of Buddhism. If he helped in the propagation of Buddhism at all, we are not aware whether he supported any particular school of Buddhism, or Buddhism in general. Throughout his exhortations, so far as they have been found in the Edicts, there is not the slightest hint of his actively helping the propagation of Buddhism. His edicts refer to the *dhammaviṇaya* as opposed to conquest by arms, but by *dhamma* he does not mean Buddhism. His *dhamma* consisted of maxims for leading an ideal life and performing meritorious acts which make a person happy in this world as well as the next. The edicts do not contain a single reference to Nirvāṇa or Śūnyatā, Anātma or Duḥkha, while on the other hand, they speak of heaven, and happiness in a heavenly life,<sup>2</sup> which was never an ideal of early Buddhism, for it considered existence in any one of the three dhātus, Kāma, Rūpa and Arūpa to be misery (*duḥkha*). But it must be admitted that when an emperor like Asoka shows a bias for a particular religion and even proclaims himself to be a Buddhist upāsaka and pays visits

<sup>1</sup> It is noteworthy that with the ordination of Mahinda are associated the names of Majjhantika (very probably of Kasmir fame) and Mahādeva, the propagator of Buddhism in Mahiṣamaṇḍala along with Moggaliputta. See also *Early History etc.*, pp. 260 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Hultsch, *Corpus*, p. liii. The remark of Dr. Hultsch that Asoka's *dhamma*, preaching for heavenly life, represents an earlier stage of Nirvāṇa is without any foundation.



to the monasteries or sacred places of the Buddhists, the religion automatically receives an impulse, and its propagation by the Buddhist monks then becomes easy. So we may regard Asoka as a passive propagator of Buddhism, and, during his rule, the religion probably made its way throughout his kingdom, also reaching places beyond his dominion, viz., the kingdoms of the Yavanas, Kambojas, Gāndhāras, Pitinikas on the west, and Coḍas, Pāṇḍyas as far as the Tāmraparṇi on the south.<sup>1</sup> As Asoka was an adherent of Buddhism only as a supporter, or as an upāsaka,<sup>2</sup> we cannot expect him to be interfering in the sectarian disputes that were going on in his time. Hence it is difficult to attach importance to the tradition of the *Mahāvamsa* that he supported the Vibhajjavādins (=Theravādins),<sup>3</sup> or to that of the *Avadānas* that he was an ardent devotee of Upagupta. It is also remarkable that he does not refer to the Bodhisattva conception, nor to the pāramitās, which could suitably have been incorporated into his code of moral maxims. His admonition to his subjects to choose the middle path, avoiding the two extremes, viz., of retirement from the world on the one hand and of indulgence in envy, anger, laziness and so forth on the other,<sup>4</sup> shows that he was not so much in favour of retirement from household life, upon which the early Hīnayāna Buddhists always laid emphasis. Asoka's preference for the life of an ideal upāsaka as against that of a monk may have stimulated the Buddhist monks to devise ways and means to popularise their religion, and as the result of the efforts of the monks in this direction, we have the large number of the Jātakas and Avadānas.

The tradition of the *Mahāvamsa* about the part played by Asoka in the Third Council with Moggaliputta Tissa as its

<sup>1</sup> For details, see Hultzsch, *Corpus* (1925), pp. xxxviii, xxxix.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. xlv–xlvi.

<sup>3</sup> *Mahāvamsa*, p. 54.

<sup>4</sup> Hultzsch, *op. cit.*, p. 114. The rendering of Prinsep, Bhandarkar and Smith is adopted here in preference to that of Hultzsch whose rendering does not appear to be in consonance with the general tenor of the inscription. See M. N. Basu's remarks in this connection in the *I.H.Q.*, III, p. 349.



head, and about the despatch of missionaries to the various parts of India still awaits verification. It is not improbable that a sectarian council of the Theravādins was held under the leadership of Moggaliputta Tissa during Asoka's rule, and that an active propaganda was set on foot to spread Buddhism in the various territories in and outside India,<sup>1</sup> which the *Mahāvamsa* recorded with a colouring of its own. In the same way, we can account for the two religious advisers of Asoka, namely Upagupta and Moggaliputta Tissa. Asoka as an impartial ruler offered equal treatment to the Buddhists and non-Buddhists. In the circumstances, it may be inferred that he would not support one school of Buddhism against another. The Theravādins as well as the Sarvāstivādins associated his name with the contemporaneous leading figures of their respective sects in order to add importance to themselves. So it would be fruitless to attempt an identification of Moggaliputta Tissa with Upagupta—as is done by Smith and other scholars.<sup>2</sup> We may with some amount of confidence accept the tradition of the *Mahāvamsa* that about the time of Asoka, Buddhism made its way to the countries of Kasmīra-Gandhāra, Mahisamandala, Vanavāsī, Yona, Mahārāṭṭha, Himavantapadesa, Suvannabhūmi and Laṅkādīpa.<sup>3</sup>

#### CAREER OF THE MAHĀSĀNGHIKAS

Further light might be thrown on the propagation of Buddhism during this period, if the tradition of the Mahāsāṅghikas had been to hand. It may be that the Chinese versions of the Mahāsāṅghika Vinaya may contain some

<sup>1</sup> The coincidence of the tradition of the Sarvāstivādins that Madhyāntika was the propagator of Buddhism in the north with that of the *Mahāvamsa* that Majjhantika was despatched to convert Kāsmīra-Gandhāra, and the corroboration of the tradition by the caskets containing the relics with the inscriptions (on the top of the lid) 'sapurisasa Kasapagotasa savahemavatācariyasa,' and (inside the lid) 'sapurisa(sa) Majhimasa' deserve consideration. See Cunningham, *Bhilsa Topes*, p. 287.

<sup>2</sup> Waddell in *J.A.S.B.*, 1897, pt. i, p. 76; *Proc. A.S.B.*, 1899, p. 70; Smith, *Early History of India*, 4th ed., p. 199 fn.

<sup>3</sup> *Mahāvamsa*, p. 94; *Sāsanavamsa*, p. 10. For detailed treatment see Smith, *Asoka* (3rd ed.), p. 44; Bhandarkar, *Asoka*, pp. 159ff.



information, but as yet we are in the dark about it. In the absence of any Mahāsāṅghika tradition, we cannot have much definite information about the Mahāsāṅghikas, or the part of India to which they confined their activities. From the account of the Vesālian Council, we can say that they retained their seat at Vesāli, and from the inscriptions on the Mathura Lion Capital (120 B.C.)<sup>1</sup> and on the Wardak vase in Afghanistan,<sup>2</sup> it may be inferred that they made attempts to proceed towards the north, but the caves of Karle and the location of the centre of activities of their offshoots, the Pubbaseliyas and Aparaseliyas, at Dhanakataka<sup>3</sup> indicate that they were later on successful in their propaganda more in the south than in the north.

According to Dr. Burgess the Amarāvati stūpas at Dhāraṇikoṭ (Dhānyakataka) were originally constructed as early as the 2nd century B.C.<sup>4</sup> and Nāgārjuna was closely associated with the Buddhist establishment of this place. At any rate there is no doubt about the fact that Dhānyakataka was the chief centre of the Caityakas, the Pūrva- and Aparasāila branches of the Mahāsāṅghika school, and that the people living there and in its neighbourhood lavished gifts on this Buddhist establishment. It was one of the places mentioned in the *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa*<sup>5</sup> as suitable for carrying on Buddhistic practices. The *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa* also mentions that it contained the relics of Buddha.<sup>6</sup> This is corroborated by the recent find of an inscription, recording a gift of a pillar by the sister of Mahārāja Mādhariputra Śrīvīrapuruṣadatta to the caitya enshrining the dhātu of Sammāsambuddha. Among the inscriptions of this place, edited by Dr. Burgess, there is one (No. 121) which refers to the Caityakas, of which the Pūrva- and Aparasāilas were branches. Among the recent finds in the neigh-

<sup>1</sup> *Ep. Ind.*, IX, pp. 139, 141, 146.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, XI, p. 211; for other places in India where the Mahāsāṅghikas made their way, see *Early History etc.*, pp. 241 ff.

<sup>3</sup> See *infra*; *Pag Sam Jon Zang*, p. 74: Dhana-srihi-glin.

<sup>4</sup> Burgess, *Amaravati and Jaggayapeta Stupas*, p. 100.

<sup>5</sup> *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa* (Trivandrum Sanskrit Series), p. 88.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*: Śrīdhānyakatake caitye jinadhātudhare.



bourhood of the place, two among other inscriptions have been found, referring to the Puvaseḷiya (Pūrvaśaila) and Avaras (Aparaśaila).<sup>1</sup> The inscriptions are supposed to be of the 2nd century A.D. Another important place near Dhānyakāṭaka was Śrīparvata (Srisailam), where, according to the Tibetan tradition, Nāgārjuna passed his last days.<sup>2</sup> The *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa* also takes notice of this mountain as a suitable place for Buddhistic practices, and one of the inscriptions, recently found, records that some devotees constructed a number of caityas and vihāras, and dug wells for pilgrims visiting the sacred place from Gandhāra, Cīna, Aparānta, Vaṅga, Vanavāsī, Tambapaṇṇidīpa, etc.<sup>3</sup> From these facts, it may be concluded that about the beginning of the Christian era there was on the bank of the Krishna in the Guntur district a very important centre of the Mahā-sāṅghikas. The name Andhakas given to the offshoots of this school<sup>4</sup> also point to the fact of its popularity in the Andhra country and of its being supported, as the Amarāvātī inscriptions show, by the kings, nobles and people of the Andhra country.

#### BUDDHISM AFTER ASOKA

The *Mahāvamsa* and the *Sāsanavamsa* present a connected history of Buddhism in India up to the period of Asoka, and then turn to the history of Buddhism in Ceylon, leaving us in the dark about the career of the Theravādins in India, till we come to the *Milindapañha*. From it we learn that king Milinda of Sāgala (Sialkot, Lahore) took great interest in Buddhism, and that Nāgasena, a native of Kaśāṅgala, the easternmost boundary of the Maḥjhima-janapada, came to him, passing through Vattaniya and Pāṭali-putta. He stopped at the Saṅkheyya pariveṇa at Sāgala.

<sup>1</sup> *Annual Report of S. I. Epigraphy*, 1924, p. 97; 1926, pp. 70, 92-03; 1927, p. 42; see also *I.H.Q.*, V, pp. 794-6.

<sup>2</sup> Burgess, *op. cit.*, p. 6; *Tāra.*, pp. 73, 81.

<sup>3</sup> *Annual Report of S.I. Epigraphy*, 1927, pp. 43, 71. Dr. L. D. Barnett kindly drew my attention to the recent finds of the inscriptions.

<sup>4</sup> *Kathāvatthupakkaraṇaṭṭhakathā*, p. 52.



This account of Nāgasena's route indicates that Buddhism had already made its way as far north as Sāgala.<sup>1</sup>

Tāranātha, however, continues the story and gives us an account of the spread of Buddhism after Asoka, but as his narrative is based mainly on the Sarvāstivāda tradition, we may regard this story as essentially that of the Sarvāstivādins. He tells us that Upagupta ordained Dhitika,<sup>2</sup> a native of Ujjayinī, at Mathura, the usual place of residence of Upagupta. The teachership was transferred from Upagupta to Dhitika, who spread the religion widely, and converted Mināra, the king of Tukhāra. Many monks of his time went thither from Kasmir and established firmly the religion at that place. They were supported by both King Mināra and his son Imhasa.<sup>3</sup> He then went to the east at Kāmarūpa where he converted the rich brahmin Siddha and established the religion there. After this, he visited Mālava and converted the rich brahmin, Adarpa, laying thereby the foundation of the religion in that region. He came at length to his native place at Ujjayinī and there spent his last days. He was succeeded by Kāla or Kṛṣṇa,<sup>4</sup> who was followed by Sudarśana of Bharukaccha. The spheres of activity of both these monks were in the west (Sindhu) and the north (Kasmir) of India generally. In connection with Kṛṣṇa, it is stated that he spread the religion in the south of India, in many small islands including Ceylon, and subsequently in Mahācīna.<sup>5</sup> Poshadha who came after him spread Buddhism in Orissa during the rule of Vigatāśoka.<sup>6</sup> Tāranātha's history is full of legends, and as such all his statements cannot be taken as authentic. But considering

<sup>1</sup> *Mil.*, pp. 8, 16.

<sup>2</sup> *Tāra.*, p. 23: All Sarvāstivāda traditions both in Chinese and Tibetan mention Dhitika as the successor of Upagupta.

<sup>3</sup> Schiefner suggests that Mināra=Menander, and Imhasa=Hermaios, see *Tāra.*, pp. 23, 24 fn.

<sup>4</sup> There is a reference to the spread of Buddhism in Ceylon also. Kṛṣṇa is said to have visited the place. *Tāra.*, p. 44.

<sup>5</sup> Kāla is called Kṛṣṇavarṇa in the Chinese tradition, see *Saṃyuktavastu*, II, p. 95b; *Tāra.*, p. 47. Tāranātha's statement that Sudarśana and Aśoka died at the same time cannot be accepted.

<sup>6</sup> *Tāra.*, p. 50.



the fact that he makes some statements which are not *prima facie* unreasonable, and are in many cases corroborated by the Chinese travellers, we can attach to them some importance, though, of course, great caution should be exercised.

### Doctrinal Developments

We shall now proceed to take a panoramic view of the doctrinal developments that took place during this period and heralded the advent of Mahāyānism. The Mahāsāṅghikas were evidently the earliest school of the Hīnayānists to show a tendency for conceiving Buddha docetically, which was later on brought to completion by a branch of theirs, the Lokottaravādins.<sup>1</sup> But whether the conception of the Bodhisattva and the practice of the six pāramitās were introduced for the first time by the Mahāsāṅghikas or by the Sarvāstivādins is uncertain. The mention of the ṣaṭ-pāramitā, the fulfilment of which is compulsory for the Bodhisattvas, is frequently found in the works of both the Sarvāstivādins and the Mahāsāṅghikas, and both are responsible for the growth of the large mass of Avadāna literature,<sup>2</sup> the central theme of which is the fulfilment of the pāramitās.

### THE GOAL OF BUDDHAHOOD

Then there remains the other conception, *viz.*, the attainment of Buddhahood as a goal to be aspired to, and the consequent lowering of the position of the Arhats.<sup>3</sup> The Theravādins do not definitely deny that Buddhahood is unattainable, for there is the instance of Sumedha brāhmaṇa be-

<sup>1</sup> *E.R.E.*, sv. Docetism, for details.

<sup>2</sup> Hüber has traced 18 Avadānas of the *Divyāvadāna* in the Chinese version of the Sarvāstivāda Vinaya (*B.E.F.E.O.*, V, pp. 1-37). See also Lévi, *T'oung Pao*, Ser. II (1907), no. I. So it is quite probable that the *Divyāvadāna* is a book of the Sarvāstivādins.

<sup>3</sup> In Vasumitra's treatise as well as in the *Kathāvatthu* it is stated that the Sarvāstivādins believed that the Arhats were liable to fall from arhathood. On this point the Theravādins hold a different opinion. They believe that the Arhats are as pure as Buddhas, and cannot fall down from that position. The Mahāsāṅghikas also do not support the Sarvāstivādins in regard to this point. See Masuda, *Origin etc.*, p. 27; *Kvu.*, i, 2.



coming Śākyamuni and that of a certain being who will become Maitreya Buddha, but such instances are so few and far between that they do not think it reasonable to hold up the ideal for the generality of the human beings to follow. They assert that a Buddha is hardly expected to arise even in many kalpas,<sup>1</sup> and this is echoed in the *Lalitavistara*, *Mahāvastu*, and some of the Mahāyānic texts; but still one reads in the *Divyāvadāna* that after the delivery of a discourse, some aspired to *Śrāvakabodhi*, some to *Pratyekabodhi*, and some to *Samyaksambodhi*.<sup>2</sup> The fact mentioned last that some aspire to Samyaksambodhi leads us to infer that by the time of the *Divyāvadāna*, the Sarvāstivādins admitted the practicability of holding up Buddhahood as an ideal. So, clearly, the Sarvāstivādins encouraged the aspiration to Buddhahood and hence to the life of a Bodhisattva, and the goal of Buddhahood was not purely Mahāsāṅghika or Mahāyānic. The Sarvāstivādins like the Theravādins conceived Buddha as an actual human being, but they magnified his qualities and powers so much that one is led to regard their conception of Buddha as that of a supra-mundane being.

#### CONTRIBUTIONS OF SARVĀSTIVĀDA TO MAHĀYĀNA

The Sarvāstivādins had two Kāya conceptions,<sup>3</sup> viz., *rūpakāya* and *dharmakāya*, but these did not bear any Mahāyānic sense, though their conception of dharmakāya helped the Yogācārins in the formation of their conception of the same (= *svasambhogakāya*). The Sarvāstivādins are also responsible for the addition of a fourth term, *śūnya*, to the usual trio, viz., *duḥkha*, *anitya*, and *anātma*, though the

<sup>1</sup> *Kadāci karahaci Tathāgatā loke uppajjanti. Dīgha*, II, p. 139; *Mtu.*, I, p. 55.

<sup>2</sup> *Divyā.*, pp. 226, 271, etc. The treatise of Vasumitra also says that the Sarvāstivādins were aware of the three Yānas. The date of the compilation of the *Divyāvadāna* may be later, but it contains many *avadānas* which are old. The mention of three Bodhis in the *Divyāvadāna* and the reference of Vasumitra in connection with the Sarvāstivādins to the three Yānas show that, to the Sarvāstivādins the Samyaksambuddhahood was a goal as much as the other two Bodhis.

<sup>3</sup> See *infra*: Chapter III (b): The Doctrine of Kāya.



word conveyed no Mahāyānic meaning as it connoted no other sense than anātma.<sup>1</sup>

But the most important doctrine of the Sarvāstivādins, which, I believe, led to the development of Mahāyāna, is their extreme *Astitvavāda* (the theory of the actual existence of elements composing a being). We may say that Mahāyāna is a continuation of the Buddhological speculations of the Mahāsāṅghikas and their offshoots, and a revolt against the *Astitvavāda* of the Sarvāstivādins—a dogma which appeared to the Mahāyānists as an utter distortion of Buddha's teachings.<sup>2</sup> It was this revolt which resulted in the other extreme, the establishment of *Dharmaśūnyatā* (non-existence of everything whatsoever) as the real teaching of Buddha.

The third contribution made by the Hīnayānists, specially by the Sarvāstivādins, is the exposition or analysis of skandhas, dhātus, āyatanas, āryasatyas, aṅgas of the prati-tyasamutpāda, and so forth.<sup>3</sup> The Mahāyānists incorporated them in their works *in toto*, although they relegated them to the domain of Saṃvṛti or Parikalpita-Paratantra, admitting, however, their utility as being indispensable to Bodhisattvas in arriving at the Paramārtha or Pariniṣpanna truth.<sup>4</sup>

#### CONTACT OF THE SARVĀSTIVĀDINS WITH THE MAHĀYĀNISTS

The Mahāsāṅghikas may have been the forerunners of Mahāyāna, but it is clear that the Sarvāstivādins contributed

<sup>1</sup> *Lal. Vis.*, p. 419; *Divyā.*, pp. 266, 367: *anitya*, *duḥkha*, *śūnya*, *anātma*. See *Kośa*, VI, p. 163 and VII, pp. 31 f. where *śūnya* is explained as being devoid of ātman, puruṣa, and so forth.

<sup>2</sup> It will be observed that the remarks of Nāgārjuna and other early Mahāyāna writers are mostly directed against the realism of the Sarvāstivādins. The *Madhyamakāvatāra* cannot help admitting that the Hīnayānists also teach *śūnyatā* as much as the Mahāyānists do (see *Le Muséon*, Vol. VIII, p. 271) but in the general attack of the Mahāyānists against the Hīnayānists, they hold the latter as *Aśūnyavādins* evidently keeping the Sarvāstivādins in mind.

<sup>3</sup> That the Mahāyānists incorporated mostly the Sarvāstivāda expositions and analyses may be asserted in view of the fact that the *Prajñāpāramitās* mention many terms, which are not very common in Pāli suttas, e.g., *Paryavasthāna*, *Samgrahavastu*, *Dvādaśāṅga* (instead of *Ḍaśāṅga*).

<sup>4</sup> See *infra*: Chapter III (d).



much to the growth of Mahāyāna in some way or other. As a sign of close contact, it may further be pointed out that Subhūti,<sup>1</sup> a prominent figure in the Sarvāstivāda tradition, plays an important rôle in the *Prajñāpāramitā*. It is anomalous to find a Hīnayāna monk explaining the śūnyatā doctrine, which goes directly against his own; so the *Prajñāpāramitā* offers us an explanation of the anomaly by saying that whatever was preached by Subhūti was preached not according to his own lights but through the influence of Buddhas. The adoption of the *Lalita Vistara* by the Mahāyānists as the recognised *Life of Buddha* also shows a point of contact between them and the Sarvāstivādins, for, as we know from the Chinese translators, the *Lalita Vistara* was a biography of Buddha of the Sarvāstivāda school. Mahāyānism in all probability germinated in the south, where the offshoots of the Mahāsāṅghikas had their centres of activities but the place where it appeared more developed was somewhere in the eastern part of India where the Sarvāstivādins were predominant. Tāranātha tells us that the *Prajñāpāramitā* was first preached by Mañjuśrī at Odivisa (Orissa),<sup>2</sup> which, if not the actual centre of the Sarvāstivādins, was in the neighbourhood of the Sarvāstivāda spheres of influence, for we have already seen that Dhītika propagated Sarvāstivāda Buddhism in Kāmrūpa, and Puṇḍravardhana was the extended eastern limit of the Sarvāstivāda Madhyadeśa. But the most fruitful contact between the Sarvāstivādins and the Mahāyānists took place at Nalanda, which became the principal centre of Mahāyāna and the seat of Nāgārjuna.

#### THE MAHĀSĀNGHIKAS WERE ESSENTIALLY HĪNAYĀNISTS

Thus we see that the Sarvāstivādins were as much responsible for the growth of Mahāyāna as the Mahāsāṅghikas.

<sup>1</sup> See, e.g., the *Ava. S.*, pp. 127-132 and p. xl. (*Kalpadrūmāva-dāna*); R. L. Mitra, *Nep. B. Lit.*, pp. 295-6. In the *Apadāna*, and in the *Anguttara*, and its commentary, Subhūti is mentioned as the chief of the Araṇavihārins, but he is not given much prominence in Pāli works.

<sup>2</sup> *Tāra.*, p. 58.



Apart from the Buddhological speculations, the Mahāsāṅghikas cannot claim much as their contribution to the growth of Mahāyāna. It may be that the *Prajñāpāramitā* which, as the Tibetan tradition tells us, was possessed by the Pūrvaśailas, contributed much to the philosophy of Mahāyāna but as yet we are completely in the dark about this *Prajñāpāramitā*. From Vasumitra's account of the tenets of the Mahāsāṅghikas<sup>1</sup> or from the discussions found in the *Kathāvatthu* about the doctrines of the Mahāsāṅghikas, one hardly notices anything particularly Mahāyānic in them. For instance, the Mahāsāṅghikas speak

(i) of the pañca- (or ṣaḍ-) vijñānakāya, differing from the Theravādins and the Sarvāstivādins as to the function of the physical organs of sense ;<sup>2</sup>

(ii) of the four or eight Hīnayānic stages of sanctification with the attainments appertaining thereto,<sup>3</sup> the *Kathāvatthu* adding that the Mahāsāṅghikas assert that the Arhats have avijjā-vicikicchā as they cannot comprehend the things that come within the purview of Buddha (Buddhaviṣaya) ;<sup>4</sup>

(iii) of the indispensability of the application (prayoga) of praññā for destroying duḥkha and obtaining sukha (i.e., final beatitude, Nirvāṇa), one of the most important tenets of the Hīnayānic schools ;<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Masuda, *op. cit.*

<sup>2</sup> Masuda, *op. cit.*, I, 22-4; *Kvu.*, xviii, 9; x, 3-4.: Pañcaviññāṇasa-maṅgissa atthi maggabhāvanā (one may practise the path while he has fivefold consciousness). The conception of Vijñāna of the Mahāsāṅghikas is a little different from that of the Theravādins and the Sarvāstivādins, specially, in view of two other tenets held by them, viz., "At one and the same moment, two minds (citta) can arise side by side" and "the nature of mind is pure in its origin, etc". Masuda, *op. cit.*, A. 43, B. 3.

<sup>3</sup> Masuda, *op. cit.*, I, 26-30, 33-5, 39, 48; *Mtu.*, I, p. 139.

<sup>4</sup> *Kvu.*, xxi, 3; i, 2. The Theravādins hold that sabbaññutañāṇa (omniscience) is a special acquisition of Buddhas and beyond the scope of Arhats; so it is wrong to hold that Arhats have avijjā-vicikicchā. Cf. Vasumitra (Masuda, *op. cit.*, I, 35): "That according to the Mahāsāṅghikas, Arhats are liable to sink while the *Kathāvatthu* (i, 2, *Cy.*, p. 35) says that some of the Mahāsāṅghikas hold that Arhats are not thus liable".

<sup>5</sup> Masuda, *op. cit.*, I, 31: For Praññā and Prayoga, see also *Mtu.*,



(iv) of samyagdr̥ṣṭi, śraddhendriya as not laukika (worldly), the *Kathāvatthu*<sup>1</sup> adding that the Mahāsāṅghikas hold that old age and death could neither be lokiya (worldly) nor lokuttara (transcendental), because they are aparinipphanna, (unmade),<sup>2</sup> and because the “decay and death of supramundane thing is supramundane and cannot be mundane”;<sup>3</sup>

(v) of samyaktva-niyāma<sup>4</sup> (destined for right knowledge) and the consequent destruction of saṃyojanas (fetters);

(vi) of Buddha’s preaching the dharma in the nītārtha sense;<sup>5</sup>

(vii) of asaṃskṛta dharmas as being nine in contrast to three of the Sarvāstivādins;<sup>6</sup>

(viii) of upakleśas (impurities), anuśayas (dormant passions) and paryavasthānas (pervading passions);<sup>7</sup>

(ix) of the non-existence of phenomena of the past and future, as against the opinion of the Sarvāstivādins,<sup>8</sup> and

(x) of the non-existence of antarābhāva (existence intermediate between death and re-birth) as against the opinion of the Sarvāstivādins<sup>9</sup> and the Sāṃmitīyas.

In these and on a few other points of difference noticed in the work of Vasumitra and the *Kathāvatthu*, there is very little to distinguish them as distinctly Mahāyānic. In the *Mahāvastu*<sup>10</sup> also, the discourses on the Truths<sup>11</sup> or the Causal

I, p. 270. Throughout *Mtu.* one notices that Nirvāṇa was conceived as sukha (kṣeme sthale śame śive nirvāṇe, *Mtu.*, I, p. 34). The Mahāyānists will have nothing to do with duḥkha or sukha.

<sup>1</sup> *Kvu.*, xv, 6.

<sup>2</sup> Mrs. Rhys Davids translates it by “not pre-determined”.

<sup>3</sup> *Points of the Controversy*, xv, 6.

<sup>4</sup> i.e., one who has entered into the Darśanamārga, see Masuda, *op. cit.*, p. 27 fn.; Cf. *Pañca.*, leaf 262b.

<sup>5</sup> Masuda, *op. cit.*, I, 5, 40. This goes directly against the Mahāyānic view that Buddha’s discourses have two senses, nītārtha and neyyārtha, and also against the Sarvāstivāda view. See Masuda, *op. cit.*, p. 52.

<sup>6</sup> Masuda, *op. cit.*, I, 41.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 44.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 45.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 47.

<sup>10</sup> It does not really belong to the Mahāsāṅghikas; so its date must be later, and it may be relegated to the third period of our division. Only those passages which corroborate the tenets of the Mahāsāṅghikas mentioned in the treatise of Vasumitra are referred to here.

<sup>11</sup> *Mtu.*, III, pp. 334, 446.



Law, or on anitya, duḥkha, and anātma do not go beyond the limits of the Hīnayāna conceptions. The only Mahāyānic traces in the tenets of the Mahāsāṅghikas are:—

(i) the Buddhological speculations, viz., that Buddhas are lokottara (supramundane), without any sāsrava dharma (defiled elements), possessed of limitless rūpakāya,<sup>1</sup> prabhāva (power), and āyu<sup>2</sup> (length of life), can remain without any sleep or dream, are always in Samādhi, and do not preach by name or designation, possess kṣaṇikacitta (i.e., understand all dharmas with a moment's thought), and so forth; and

(ii) the Bodhisattva conception, viz., that the Bodhisattvas are not born and do not grow in the womb in the same way as an ordinary being, are not defiled by the impurities of the womb,<sup>3</sup> enter the womb in full consciousness,<sup>4</sup> never harbour any feeling of kāma (lust),<sup>5</sup> hatred or injury, and take birth in hina-gatis (lower forms of existences) for the benefit of the various classes of sentient beings, and so forth.<sup>6</sup>

These Buddhological speculations are more or less corollaries to the Mahāsāṅghika conception of the life of Śākya-muni. The Mahāsāṅghikas do not show thereby any recognition that all beings can become Bodhisattvas and ultimately Buddhas. The conception of the four caryās and the ten

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Mtu.*, I, p. 263: Buddha appears everywhere. In the *Nikāyas* one also reads “eko pi hutvā bahudhā hoti, etc.” *Dīgha*, I, p. 78. In the *Lalitā Vistara* (p. 100) we read of the Bodhisattva appearing in all the houses presented to him by the Sakiyans.

<sup>2</sup> Masuda, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 18, 19; *Kvu.*, xi, 5: The Mahāsāṅghikas cite the passage of the *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta*, in which Buddha said to Ananda that he could live many kalpas if he had wished so. The Theravādins without refuting this statement cite another passage which goes against this view.

<sup>3</sup> *Mtu.*, I, p. 143; II, pp. 14–15: Garbhāvakrānti and sthiti are all miraculous; Bodhisattvas are not touched by any impurities, *Mtu.*, II, pp. 16, 20.

<sup>4</sup> *Mtu.*, II, p. 10.

<sup>5</sup> *Mtu.*, I, p. 153: Kāmā na sevanti. Rāhula was an aupapāduka. He descended from Tuṣita heaven and remained in mother's womb for six years (*Mtu.*, III, p. 159).

<sup>6</sup> Masuda, *op. cit.*, p. 21.



bhūmis of the Lokottaravādins indicates a slight leaning to Mahāyānism. Thus there appears to be little of Mahāyāna in the tenets of the Mahāsāṅghikas.<sup>1</sup> The Mahāsāṅghikas, therefore, were essentially Hīnayānists, only with the conception of Buddha slightly different.

Now we can state briefly the history of Buddhism in the second period thus :

1. Buddhism is no longer one. It divides itself into three principal sections, viz., the Theravāda, the Sarvāstivāda, and the Mahāsāṅghika. The Theravādins remained in the central belt of India, making their position stronger in Avantī where Mahākaccāyana had laid the foundation of Buddhism and from which place Mahinda was sent out to Ceylon to propagate the Theravāda Buddhism. The Sarvāstivādins were also in the central belt of India with their centres of activity in Mathura and Kasmir, the former being founded by Upagupta and the latter by Madhyāntika. Dhītika, the successor of both Upagupta and Madhyāntika, spread it widely all over Northern India including Tukhāra on the north-west, Mālava, and Oḍiṣa (Orissa), and Kāmārūpa on the east. The Mahāsāṅghikas established themselves at Vesālī and had followers sprinkled all over Northern India, but they became popular in the south. In short, Buddhism during this period spread all over Northern India and portions of Southern India.

2. Emperor Asoka took a great interest in Buddhism but did not help any particular sect. The *dhamma* preached in his edicts is mainly ethical and lacks the specific colourings of any school of Buddhism or of later Buddhism. He encouraged more the leading of a righteous household life than that of a monk or an ascetic. He, however, respected and supported the monks and recluses. The interest taken by rulers, like Mināra and Imhasa, helped greatly the propagation of Buddhism outside India.

<sup>1</sup> The tenet of the Mahāsāṅghikas that "the nature of mind is pure in its origin; it becomes impure when it is stained by passions (*upakleśas*), the adventitious dust (*āgantukarajas*)" has, according to Masuda, been developed by Aśvaghoṣa in his *Awakening of Faith*. See Masuda, *op. cit.*, p. 30.



3. The relation of the laity to the Buddhist Saṅgha was not materially altered as compared with previous conditions but a greater interest was created for the laity by popularising Buddhism through the Jātakas and Avadānas, and by holding up the Pāramitā practices before their view.

4. Much stress was laid on the composition of the *Jātakas* and *Avadānas*, and great religious merit was attached to reading, writing, painting, and carving them. This caught the fancy of the laity as a means of earning religious merit, and resulted in many sculptures, only some of which are preserved to us at Sanchi and Bharaut. The credit of popularising the religion through the Jātakas and Avadānas is due, in the first instance, to the Sarvāstivādins, and later, to the Theravādins.

5. The old division of *Navāṅga* is increased to *Dvādaśāṅga* by the addition of Nidāna, Avadāna, and Upadeśa. Though the Jātakas formed one of the divisions of the Navāṅga, they did not exist as a separate literature, but were embodied in the discourses purporting to have been delivered by Buddha and his disciples.

6. The *Life of Buddha* commenced not from the time of Siddhārtha's retirement but from the first resolution (prañidhāna) formed by Sumedha brāhmaṇa, and the prophecy (veyyākaraṇa) made by Dipaṅkara Buddha.

7. The essential doctrines are still the same as in the first period with slight changes, e.g., the addition of *śūnya* to the usual anitya, duḥkha, and anātma, and of the six pāramitās to the thirty-seven Bodhipakṣika dharmas.

8. Some radical changes were effected in the tenets of the schools which developed during this period, e.g., the Sarvāstivādins started their doctrine of realism, of the existence of past, present, and future, and so forth, while the Mahāsāṅghikas conceived Buddha docetically and introduced the Bodhisattva conception.

9. The goal of life remained Arhathood and Pratyekabuddhahood with the Theravādins, while the Sarvāstivādins added to them the Samyaksambuddhahood.

10. The conception of *Nirvāṇa* as sukha, śānta, etc., did not change much, the Sarvāstivādins and the Mahāsāṅghikas



agreeing mainly with the Theravādins.<sup>1</sup> But the doctrine of realism of the Sarvāstivādins has led Prof. Stcherbatsky to interpret their Nirvāṇa as an ultimate lifeless state.<sup>2</sup>

11. The growth of the *Abhidhamma* literature took place during this period. As the principal schools located their centres of activity in different places of India, the development of this literature of each school was independent of that of the rest. This accounts for the wide divergence between the Abhidhamma literature of the Theravādins and that of the Sarvāstivādins.

12. The conception of the Bodhisattva, the Pāramitā practices, and the goal of Buddhahood are the only Mahāyānic traces that appear in the doctrines of the Mahāsāṅghikas and the Sarvāstivādins, and their offshoots.

### THIRD PERIOD

(circa 100 B.C. to 300 A.C.)

#### C. THE BEGINNINGS OF MAHĀYĀNA

Before we proceed to ascertain the approximate time of the emergence of Mahāyāna, we must determine the special characteristics which distinguish Mahāyāna from Hīnayāna. Generally speaking, Mahāyānism is associated with

- (i) the conception of the Bodhisattva,
- (ii) the practice of the Pāramitās,
- (iii) the development of Bodhicitta,
- (iv) the ten stages (*bhūmi*) of spiritual development,
- (v) the goal of Buddhahood,
- (vi) the conception of Trikāya, and
- (vii) the conception of Dharmaśūnyatā or Dharmasamātā or Tathatā.

<sup>1</sup> The Sarvāstivādins held that the *vimukti* of the Śrāvakas, Pratyekabuddhas, and Buddhas is the same. Masuda, *op. cit.*, p. 49. The Mahiśāsakas held the same view (Masuda, *op. cit.*, p. 62), but not the Dharmaguptas. The *Sūtrālaṅkāra*, however, holds that with regard to *vimukti*, the Buddhas and the Śrāvakas stand on the same footing. This is also the opinion of the other Yogācāra texts. See *infra*. Cf. also *Mtu.*, II, pp. 285, 345.

<sup>2</sup> Stcherbatsky, *Con. of N.*, pp. 25 ff., but see ch. III. (c).



The Mahāyānists distinguish themselves by saying that they seek the removal of both *klesāvaraṇa* and *jñeyāvaraṇa* and this is possible by the realisation of both *pudgalaśūnyatā* and *dharmaśūnyatā*. The Hinayānists realise only the former, and thereby remove *klesāvaraṇa*. They, therefore, attain *vimukti* (emancipation) from *kleśas*, and as far as this is concerned, they are on the same footing with the Mahāyānists, but they lack true knowledge as conceived by the Mahāyānists, *viz.*, *dharmaśūnyatā*, because they do not remove *jñeyāvaraṇa*. The Hinayānists, however, do not admit their inferiority with regard to *jñāna*, for they consider that the destruction of *avidyā* (ignorance of the truth) or, in other words, acquisition of true knowledge is the only means to emancipation and this is effected by Arhats in the same way as by Buddhas. The Arhats are very often mentioned in the Pāli works as attaining *sambodhi*. They, however, admit that Buddhas, on account of their superior merits (technically, *gotra*), due to their long practice of meritorious actions, attain some powers and privileges, and also omniscience, which are beyond the reach of the Arhats. This is, in short, the relative position of the Hinayānists and the Mahāyānists.

If the development of Hinayāna in its various phases be examined, one cannot help observing that some of the distinguishing characteristics of Mahāyāna mentioned above are also found in the later phases of Hinayāna, *e.g.*,

- (i) the conception of the Bodhisattva,
- (ii) the practice of the six *pāramitās*,
- (iii) the development of *Bodhicitta*,
- (iv) the goal of Buddhahood, and
- (v) two of the *Kāya* conceptions, *viz.*, *Rūpa-* (or *Nirmāṇa-*) *kāya* and *Dharmakāya*, the conception of the latter being essentially different from that of the Mahāyānists.<sup>1</sup> So, to be exact about the time of emergence of Mahāyāna, we should consider when the conceptions of *Dharmaśūnyatā* and *Dharmakāya* (= *Tathatā*) came to be introduced.

<sup>1</sup> In the *Mū.*, the expression *Sambhogakāya* does not occur; yet the description of Buddha's body sometimes shows it to be tantamount to that conception.



## SEMI-MAHĀYĀNA

From what we have seen above in regard to the lines of development in the preceding period, it is evident that the Hīnayānists either to popularise Buddhism or to interest the laity more in it, incorporated in their doctrines the conception of the Bodhisattva and the practice of the pāramitās.<sup>1</sup> This was effected by the production of the new literature, the *Jātakas* and *Avadānas*. As the *Jātakas* confine themselves to the previous lives of Buddha, we must look to the *Avadānas* specially for the introduction of the Bodhisattva conception, and for its presentation as an ideal for the laity. The object of the *Avadānas* is to show how the devotees sacrifice every thing, even their lives, for the performance of the pāramitās, not for any earthly or heavenly pleasures, but for the attainment of bodhi and thus for the rescue of all beings from misery.<sup>2</sup>

The *Divyāvadāna*, as we have seen, refers to the aspiration for the attainment of Buddhahood. So also, one reads in the *Mahāvastu*<sup>3</sup> about devotees developing Bodhicitta and aspiring to Buddhahood by the simple act of worshipping a stūpa or making some presents to it. In connection with the Sarvāstivādins, the treatise of Vasumitra speaks (i) of the sameness of vimukti of Buddhas, Śrāvakas, and Pratyekabuddhas; (ii) of the three Yānas; and (iii) of Bodhisattvas continuing to be pṛthagjana till they step into the samyaktva-niyāma (the path leading to the right knowledge).<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For an interesting discussion on this point see Speyer, *Ava. S.*, pp. v ff.

<sup>2</sup> *Divyā.*, p. 473: Rūpavatī makes sacrifice for “na rājyārtham na bhogārtham na svargārtham na śakrārtham na rājñām cakravartinām viṣayārtham nānyatrāham anuttarām samyaksambodhim abhisambudhyādāntān damayeyam amuktān mocayeyam anāśvastān āśvāsayeyam aparinirvṛtān parinirvāpayeyam”.

<sup>3</sup> *Mtu.*, pp. 364, 365, 367: bodhāya cittam nametvā; pp. 375, 377 bodhim atulyam spṛśati.

<sup>4</sup> Masuda, *op. cit.*, p. 49: “The Buddha and the two vehicles have no differences as to emancipation (vimukti): the Aryan paths (mārga) of the three vehicles (however) differ from one another. This is wanting in the Tibetan version.” Masuda contradicts Wassiljew’s opinion (p. 275, n.4) that it is an interpolation of the later Mahāyānists.



The *Mahāvastu* also speaks of the existence of the three Yānas<sup>1</sup> and of the paths and practices to be followed by a Bodhisattva. It mentions the four caryās of a Bodhisattva and the ten bhūmis but the conception of the bhūmis, as will be shown hereafter,<sup>2</sup> has very little in common with that of the ten bhūmis of the Daśabhūmikasūtra except the first two. Of course, it may be assumed that the Lokottaravāda conception of the bhūmis served as the seed for the later development of the Mahāyānic conception.

Thus the Avadānas, which are primarily the production of the Sarvāstivādins, clearly show a new phase of development within Hīnayānic Bodhisattva-yāna. The Lokottaravādins of the Mahāsāṅghikas show a little more development than the Sarvāstivādins by defining the four caryās, viz., *prakṛticaryā*, *prañidhānacaryā*, *anulomacaryā*, and *anivartanacaryā*,<sup>3</sup> the first referring to the preliminary practices of a Bodhisattva while he is a prthagjana, the second to the development of Bodhicitta, the third to the gradual progress made by a Bodhisattva up to the sixth bhūmi, and the fourth to the practice of the last four bhūmis<sup>4</sup> from which a Bodhisattva can never retrocede but must ultimately attain Bodhi. The attainment of Bodhi, therefore, came to be regarded as one of the goals of Hīnayāna. It is for this reason that we see the *Kośa* discussing the thirty-four moments required for the attainment of Bodhi,<sup>5</sup> and other matters relating to

For the vimuktisāmānya of the Śrāvakas, Pratyekabuddhas, and Buddhas, see *infra*.

Masuda, *op. cit.*, p. 50: The Haimavata school supports the Sarvāstivādins on this point, adding, however, that the Bodhisattvas are not subject to rāga and kāma. See Masuda, *op. cit.*, p. 52. The *Mtu.* calls a Bodhisattva in the first bhūmi a prthagjana who becomes an Ārya from the second bhūmi; see *infra* ch. IV.

<sup>1</sup> *Mtu.*, II, p. 362.

<sup>2</sup> See *infra*, ch. IV; also Rahder's Intro. to *Daśa.*, pp. iii f.

<sup>3</sup> *Mtu.*, I, p. 46; *Lal. Vis.*, p. 35.

<sup>4</sup> The writer of the *Mtu.* had very vague ideas about the last four bhūmis; so he dismissed them with mere enumerations of some names of Buddhas and recounting some stories.

<sup>5</sup> *Kośa*, II, 44; VI, 21a-b; cf. *Kvu.*, i. 5; xviii. 5; *Paṭis. M.*, I, pp. 121 ff. discusses the nāna of Buddhas.



Buddhahood, and the Hīnayānic works<sup>1</sup> mentioning some of the Bodhisattva practices and philosophical expressions like śūnyatā, dharmadhātu, dharmakāya, tathātva, though they are devoid of their new Mahāyānic sense.

In view of these facts, we may hold that before Mahāyāna came into existence with its new interpretation of Buddha's words, evolving a new sense of śūnyatā, there had already been a Hīnayānic Bodhisattvayāna, which can be called semi-Mahāyāna, or Mahāyāna in the making. This semi-Mahāyāna concerned itself only with the six Pāramitā practices and the extraordinary powers and knowledge attained by Buddhas. It was as yet unaware of 'Advaya Advaidhikāra', Dharmasūnyatā or Tathatā. That the six pāramitās belong to the domain of Hīnayāna is also hinted at in the *Daśabhūmikasūtra*.<sup>2</sup> In this sūtra as well as in other treatises dealing with the bhūmis, the ten bhūmis are divided into two sections, the first six carrying a Bodhisattva to the realisation of the Pudgalaśūnyatā, or in other words, the Truth as conceived by the Hīnayānists, and the last four leading to the realisation of Dharmasūnyatā, the Truth as conceived by the Mahāyānists. So the actual Mahāyānic stages of progress commence from the seventh, but we learn from the *Daśabhūmikasūtra* that the six pāramitās are completed by a Bodhisattva in the first six bhūmis. Thus, it follows that the practice of Pāramitās alone does not make a person a follower of the Mahāyāna, though we must admit that the Māhayāna takes its stand upon the pāramitās as far as the practices are concerned, for it is said in the *Prajñāpāramitās* that Buddhas deliver discourses connected with the six pāramitās,<sup>3</sup> and in the *Madhyamakāvatāra* that the Mahāyāna teaches not only śūnyatā but also the pāramitās, bhūmis, and so forth.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Mtu.*, II, p. 357: Śūnyatām śāntaṃ bhāventi, see also *Samyutta* II, p. 267; III, p. 167.

<sup>2</sup> See *infra*, ch. IV.

<sup>3</sup> *Pañca.*, p. 7: ṣaṭpāramitāpratisaṃyuktāṃ dharmadeśanāṃ karoti.

<sup>4</sup> *M. Ava.*, (*Le Muséon*, VIII, p. 271): En effet, la doctrine du Grand Véhicule n'enseigne pas seulement le néant des éléments, mais encore les terres des Bodhisattvas, les vertus transcendantes (pāramitās),



Lastly, the fact, that the conceptions of *nirnimitta* and *niḥsvabhāva* indicating the chief features of the attainments of a Bodhisattva in the last four bhūmis were yet unknown to the compiler of the *Mahāvastu*, is evident from his inability to mention the qualities attained in the last four bhūmis.<sup>1</sup> Hence it may be concluded that Buddhism entered into its semi-Mahāyānic stage very early, if not at the time of Asoka, at any rate, soon after him.

#### THE TIME OF COMPOSITION OF THE *Prajñāpāramitā*

The new Mahāyānic conception of Śūnyatā was for the first time propounded in the *Prajñāpāramitās* and therefore we should try to ascertain when the *Prajñāpāramitā* first came into existence. There is the Tibetan tradition that the Pūrvaśailas and Aparāśailas had a *Prajñāpāramitā* in the Prākṛt dialect;<sup>2</sup> unfortunately no other information about it is forthcoming. Tāranātha tells us that shortly after the time of King Mahāpadma Nanda, a king called Candragupta lived in Odivisa (Orissa).<sup>3</sup> Mañjuśrī came to his house in the form of a bhikṣu and delivered the Mahāyāna teaching. The Sautrāntikas maintain that this teaching was the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā*, while the Tantra school asserts that it was the *Tattvasaṅgraha*.<sup>4</sup> We may safely dismiss the Tantric tradition in view of the materials that are contained in the *Tattvasaṅgraha*,<sup>5</sup> and attach importance to the Sautrāntika tradition that the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā* was the earliest text to contain the Mahāyāna teaching. If the contents of the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā*, the *Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā*, and the *Śatasāhasrikā* be compared, it will be seen that the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā* is

les résolutions (praṇidhāna), la grande compassion, etc., mais encore l'application du mérite à illumination, les deux equipments de mérite et de savoir et la nature incompréhensible du dharma (acintya-dharma-matā).

<sup>1</sup> See ante p. 37, fn. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Wassiljew, *Buddhismus*, p. 291 quoting the Tibetan *Siddhānta*.

<sup>3</sup> *Tāra.*, p. 58; *Pag Sam Jon Zang.*, p. 82 also says that Mahāyāna Buddhism had its beginning in Odivisa shortly after the reign of Mahāpadma Nanda.

<sup>4</sup> Recently published in the Gaekwad Oriental Series.

<sup>5</sup> For a survey of its contents see my review in *I.H.Q.*, Dec., 1929.



the earliest of the three and that it can be dated as early as the first century B.C.<sup>1</sup>

#### THE GEOGRAPHICAL DATA ABOUT THE ORIGIN OF MAHĀYĀNA

Without attaching much importance to the chronology of kings and such other materials presented to us by Tāranātha, we may with sufficient caution utilise some of his statements with regard to the developments in the history of the religion, the geographical distribution of the schools, and the succession of teachers in the various centres. He tells us that according to one tradition, 500 bodhisattvas<sup>2</sup> took part in the Jalandhara Council of Kaniska, that about this time the Mahāyāna texts appeared and were usually preached by monks, who had attained the *Anutpattikā-dharmakṣānti* ("Geduld in der Lehre des Nichtgeborenwerdens"),<sup>3</sup> a dogma characteristic of the Mahāyānists. It may be a development of the Hīnayānic Anutpāda-jñāna (further non-origin of āśravas and hence re-birth) and Kṣaya-jñāna,<sup>4</sup> but it bore a completely different sense in the Mahāyāna scriptures. The reference to the existence of a class of monks called Bodhisattvas at the time of Kaniska's Council is also significant, for we read in the *Divyāvadāna* of the existence of a class of monks called *Bodhisattvajātika* along with a hint that they were not looked upon with favour by the Hīnayānists.<sup>5</sup> Tāranātha expresses his difficulty in accounting for the existence of monks called Bodhisattvas in the Kaniskan Council. He tells us further that about the time

<sup>1</sup> For details see Intro. to the *Pañca*. (published in C.O.S.).

<sup>2</sup> Āśvaghoṣa is called a bodhisattva in the Chinese *Samyukta-ratna-piṭaka-sūtra* (No. 1329, Vol. VI). See Takakusu, *I-tsing*, p. lix. Cf. De Groot, *Le Code du Mahayana en Chine*, p. 8: Two or three days after the first ordination according to the Prātimokṣa rules, the monks pass through a special ordination according to the Brahmajāla sūtra and become bodhisattva. See *infra*, Ch. V.

<sup>3</sup> *Tāra.*, p. 61. See *M. Vr.*, p. 363 n.; *Laṅkā.*, p. 81; *Aṣṭa.*, p. 331: anutpāda-jñānakṣāntiko bodhisattva. See *infra*, Ch. III.

<sup>4</sup> For Anutpāda-jñāna and Kṣaya-jñāna, see *Kośa*, VI, 17, 71. The Kṣaya-jñāna with the Anutpāda-jñāna makes the Bodhi; see also *Kośa*, vi, 50; vii, 1, 46, 7.

<sup>5</sup> *Divyā.*, p. 261.



of Kaniska, the brahmin Kulika of Saurāṣṭra invited the Sthavira and Arahanta Nanda, a native of Aṅga, who had comprehended the Mahāyāna teaching in order to hear from him the new teaching.<sup>1</sup> The only point that deserves notice is the use of the appellations, Arahanta and Sthavira, indicating that Nanda was a Hinayanist monk who had comprehended the Mahāyāna teaching. The remark of Tāranātha that monks who had attained Anutpattikadharmakṣānti preached also Mahāyāna shows that there was a class of Hinayāna monks who had been propagating the Mahāyāna teaching.<sup>2</sup> Then the association of Odivisa with the beginning of Mahāyāna teaching, and of the monk Nanda with Aṅga suggest that we should look for the origin of Mahāyāna somewhere in the east. A passage occurring in all the *Prajñāpāramitās* partially lends support to the statement of Tāranātha. The passage says that Mahāyāna teaching will originate in the south (Dakṣiṇāpatha), pass to the eastern countries (Vartanyām),<sup>3</sup> and prosper in the north. Evidently, this statement of the *Prajñāpāramitās* was written while the work was compiled in the north after the Mahāyāna teaching had been effectively propagated there. We may substantiate this statement by pointing to the Tibetan tradition about the existence of a *Prajñāpāramitā* in the Prākṛt dialect belonging to the Śaila schools, the centre of which was in the south (Guntur District). Very probably, this *Prajñāpāramitā* contained the germs of Mahāyāna teaching. Then the shifting of the centre of Mahāyāna to the east is hinted at by Tāranātha, as referred to above. In this connection it may also be pointed out that Nalanda was one of the earliest centres and storehouses of Mahāyāna teaching, becoming, later on, the seat of Nāgārjuna. So, it seems quite probable that Mahāyānism originated in the south some time before Kaniska and became a recognised form of Buddhism by the time of Kaniska, i.e., about the beginning

<sup>1</sup> *Tāra.*, p. 62.

<sup>2</sup> Can it be that Aśvaghōṣa, author of the *Buddhacarita*, belonged to this class of Hinayāna monks?

<sup>3</sup> *Aṣṭa.*, p. 225. For Vartanyām, see *Trikāṇḍakeśa*, 2. 1. 12.



of the Christian era when it established its chief centre in the east, gradually pushing its way towards the north to blossom forth in its full glory under the care of the great Nāgārjuna. In the south too, it continued to thrive, for in the *Gaṇḍavyūha* we read that Mañjuśrī started from Jetavana to travel in Dakṣiṇāpatha<sup>1</sup> and came to Māladhvajavyūha caitya in the great city of Dhanyākara,<sup>2</sup> where many devotees lived. Here he delivered a discourse and aroused aspiration for bodhi in the mind of Sudhanu, son of a rich banker of the place and directed him to go to Sugrīvaparvata in the country of Rāmavartta (also in Dakṣiṇāpatha) in order to learn the Samantabhadra-bodhisattva-caryā. Sudhanu travelled over many places<sup>3</sup> of the Dakṣiṇāpatha in search of knowledge, arriving at last at Dvāravatī. After learning all that he could in southern India, he went to Kapilavastu and travelled over some countries<sup>4</sup> of the north. In the *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa*<sup>5</sup> also Dhānyakataka, Śrīparvata, and a few other places of the Dakṣiṇāpatha are mentioned, showing the prevalence of Buddhism there. Nāgārjuna, whose birthplace was in Vidarbha (Berar),<sup>6</sup> also dwelt in the south, passing his last days at Śrīparvata (mod. Śrīśailam).<sup>7</sup> Āryadeva likewise came from Southern India, as did also Nāga,<sup>8</sup> the other disciple

<sup>1</sup> *Gaṇḍavyūha* (A. S. B. ms.) leaf 19b.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 21b: Dakṣiṇāpathe Dhanyākaran nāma mahānagaram. Very likely it is the same as the famous Dhānyakataka (Dharaṇikotā).

<sup>3</sup> The names of places in some cases seem to be fictitious; some of the names are:—Sāgaramukha, Sāgaranāma, Laṅkāpatham, Vajrapuranāma Draviḍa-paṭṭala, Vanavāsī, Milasphuraṇam nāma Jamudvipasīrṣam, Potalaka (the dwelling-place of Avalokiteśvara), and Dvāravatī.

<sup>4</sup> The northern countries visited by him are:—Bodhimāṇḍa and Kapilavastu.

<sup>5</sup> *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa* (Trivandrum Sanskrit Series), p. 88.

<sup>6</sup> Walleser, *Die Lebenszeit des Nagarjuna* in *Z. für Buddhismus* (Munich), I, pp. 95ff.

<sup>7</sup> Nāgārjuna's name is closely associated with Dhānyakataka, near which are Śrīparvata and Nāgārjunikuṇḍa (west of Palnad Taluk); for details see Burgess, *Stūpas of Amarāvati*, pp. 5, 6, 112; *Annual Report of South Indian Epigraphy*, 1926-7, p. 71.

<sup>8</sup> Nāgāhvaya in *Laṅkā.*, p. 286: see Vaidya's *Catuhśatikā, Intro.*,



of Nāgārjuna. So, it appears that the south may claim credit for being not only the birthplace of Mahāyāna itself, but also of the noted figures, who were instrumental in making Mahāyāna what it was in the 2nd and 3rd century A. C. The dates of Āryadeva and Nāga are placed in the early part of the 3rd century (200–225) and Nāgārjuna precedes them by a few decades.<sup>1</sup> The glory of Nāgārjuna and his school of philosophy threw into the shade the great figure of Maitreya, the traditional founder of the Yogācāra school, until the time of Asaṅga, who brought his works into prominence and placed this school of philosophy on a high pedestal.

#### NATURE OF THE CONTENTS OF EARLY MAHĀYĀNA WORKS

The first two centuries of the Christian era witnessed the conflict between Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna as well as the systematisation of the Mahāyāna doctrines. The works which depict (in one-sided fashion, it must be admitted) this struggle, viz., the *Prajñāpāramitās*, *Saddharmapundarika*, *Laṅkāvatara*, *Daśabhūmikasūtra*, and *Gaṇḍavyūha*, were very probably the products of this period, but evidences are still lacking as to the exact dates of composition of these works. The only clue is supplied by the dates of their Chinese translations, but these are to be regarded as the latest limits of the time of their composition.<sup>2</sup> In the absence of any definite data about the earliest limit, we can take into consideration

pp. 22, 61; Wassiljew, *op. cit.*, p. 130; Vidyābhūṣaṇa's *Logic* (1st ed.), p. 71.

<sup>1</sup> Prof. Walleser thinks it should be the beginning of the 2nd century. See *Z. für Buddhismus* (6 Jahrgang, Schluss Heft), p. 242; *I-tsing*, p. lvii; Nāgārjuna, Āsvaghoṣa, and Āryadeva are regarded as contemporaries of Kaṇiṣka.

<sup>2</sup> Dates of the Chinese translations:

(i) Of the *Prajñāpāramitās*, the earliest translated is the *Daśasāhasrikā*, which, however, has no Sanskrit original. It was translated between 25 and 220 A.C.; the *Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā* between 265 and 316; and the *Śatasāhasrikā* about 659.

(ii) The *Saddharmapundarika* was translated between 265 and 316 by Dharmarakṣa, and between 384 and 417 by Kumārajīva. For its various versions, see Hoernle, *Manuscript Remains, etc.*, pp. 139ff.;



the nature of their contents, indicating a time when the Mahāyānists were trying to belittle the Hīnayānists. The *Prajñāpāramitās* are full of Hīnayānic technical expressions and phraseology, meant to show how the position of the Hīnayānists is untenable, how they are deluded by the superficialities of the religion, and how insignificant their knowledge is in comparison with that of a bodhisattva practising the *prajñāpāramitā*. The *Saddharma-Puṇḍarīka* sets itself to the task of proving that the Hīnayānists are of poor intellect, but yet they can make progress in religious matters, ultimately turning to Mahāyāna and comprehending the truth. The *Gaṇḍavyūha* essays to depict the great struggles of a bodhisattva—struggles which are beyond the capacity of the Hīnayānists—in order to learn the Samantabhadra-bodhisattvacaryā; Sudhanu visits many bodhisattvas, bhikṣus, bhikṣuṇīs, upāsakas, and upāsikās versed in certain portions of the Cāryā and acquires the same from them. The *Daśabhūmikasūtra*, as the title indicates, relates the practices connected with the bhūmis, the gradual stages of a bodhisattva's sanctification. It also never misses an opportunity to attack the Hīnayānists and to show how the last four bhūmis of the bodhisattvas are wholly beyond the capacity of the śrāvakas. The *Laṅkāvatāra*, though one of the latest books of this group to be translated, contains an exposition of the early Yogācāra system and it harps throughout on the theme, viz., how the Hīnayānists are concerned only with svasāmānyalakṣaṇa (particular and generic characteristics of things) and are ignorant of the non-existence of all things.

The Mahāyāna works that immediately follow are those of Nāgārjuna, Asaṅga, Āryadeva, Vasubandhu, etc. Though

*J.R.A.S.*, 1927, pp. 252ff.; *Fcer, Annales du Musée Guimet*, II, p. 242; *As. Res.*, XX, p. 436; Wassiljew, *Buddhismus*, p. 151.

(iii) The *Laṅkāvatāra* was translated by Guṇabhadra (443 A.C.) and Bodhiruci (553). See *Eastern Buddhist*, IV, p. 99.

(iv) The *Daśabhūmikasūtra* was translated by Dharmarakṣa (297 A.C.) and by Kumārajīva (384–417). See Rahder's Intro. to the *Daśa*.

(v) The *Gaṇḍavyūha* was translated between 317 and 420 A.C.



the main object of Nāgārjuna's *Kārikā* is to establish the idea that things are relatively existent, and that the truth is one and realisable only within one's own self, he takes up the chief dogma of the Hīnayānic schools and tries to prove its hollowness from the new standpoint set up by him. Asaṅga, though of a much later date, does not allow the Hīnayānic doctrines to pass unnoticed. He shows in his *Sūtrālaṅkāra* the inferiority of the Hīnayānists in mental calibre and their unfitness to comprehend the truth. Vasubandhu likewise in his *Vijñaptimātratāsiddhi* pointedly indicates how the Hīnayānists labour under misconceptions, the complete eradication of which is the aim of the Mahāyānists. Thus we see that though most of the works mentioned above belong to a time posterior to that with which we are here primarily concerned, they present us with materials illustrative of the conflict for ascendancy that was going on between the Hīnayānists and the Mahāyānists.

One remarkable feature, however, of the criticisms contained in these works against the Hīnayānists is that they do not attempt to distort the position of the Hīnayānists in order to win the laurel for the Mahāyānists. The statements made in them with regard to the Hīnayānists are mostly borne out by the earlier and later Hīnayāna works. Hence, instead of distorting their real position, they throw a flood of light on the Hīnayānic doctrines. The Mahāyānists found fault with the Hīnayānists, not because they misinterpreted the teachings of Buddha but because they looked upon as truth that which appeared to the Mahāyānists as only partial. In the next chapter, we shall examine the estimate made of the Hīnayānists by the Mahāyānists, and the reasons underlying such an estimate.



## CHAPTER II

### General Observations on the Relation between Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna

Throughout the long history of Buddhism, unity amidst diversity is strikingly evident. Every student or adherent of Buddhism, at all times and places, admits that Buddha taught a middle path (*madhyamā pratipad*), comprising a doctrine which kept clear of the two extremes, existence and non-existence,<sup>1</sup> eternity and non-eternity of the world and its contents, and a discipline which advocated neither self-mortification nor a life of ease. Without questioning the validity of the doctrines of the Teacher about the two extremes, the Buddhist philosophers found ample latitude for speculations about the middle path, but they failed to come to any agreement about the sort of life that Buddha actually wanted men to lead. Some understood it to consist in the leading of the life of a monk and realising the transitoriness of the things of this world including the self; while others understood it to be living in and through this world and realising that there is absolutely no difference between one's self and any other thing of the world, or, in the words of the Mahāyānic texts, between Saṃsāra (world) and Nirvāṇa (its cessation). Even the formulæ, Sarvaṃ duḥkhaṃ, Sarvaṃ anityaṃ, and Sarvaṃ anātmaṃ,<sup>2</sup> which came to be recognised as the characteristic marks of

<sup>1</sup> See *Vinaya*, *Mv.*, i. 5. 17; *Mtu.*, III, pp. 331, 345; *Saṃyutta*, II, pp. 17, 20, 76, 23, 61, III, p. 235. Also

*M. Vr.*, p. 445:

Na śūnyaṃ nāpi cāśūnyaṃ tasmāt sarvaṃ vidhīyate,

\* \* sattvād asattvāc ca madhyamā pratipac ca sā.

*M. Vr.*, p. 504: Bhāvābhāvāntadvaya-rahitatvāt-sarvasvabhāvānutpattilakṣaṇā śūnyatā madhyamā pratipān madhyamo mārga ity ucyate.

*Sūtrā.*, p. 53: antadvayānuyogapratipakṣeṇa vinayaḥ sāvadyapari-bhoga-pratiśedhataḥ kāmasukhallikānuyogāntasyānāvadyaparibhogānujñānata ātmaklamathānuyogāntasya.

<sup>2</sup> All is full of misery, All is transitory, and All is egoless.



Buddhism, lost their value in the eyes of the later Buddhists, the Mahāyānists. But *Nirvāṇam śāntam*,<sup>1</sup> however, never lost its charm for any of the Buddhist thinkers. Almost all of them agree in holding that Nirvāṇa is śānta (peaceful i.e., unruffled by origination and destruction) and that it is something inexpressible, and without decay and origin. It has found expression in the well-known lines of the

*Mādhyamika Vṛtti*:<sup>2</sup> aniruddham anutpannam etan nirvāṇam ucyate (Nirvāṇa is . . . undecaying and unoriginating) and

*Itivuttaka*:<sup>3</sup> Atthi, bhikkhave, abhūtam akatam asaṅkhatam (there is, o bhikkhus, the unborn, uncreated, and unconstituted).

#### THE EXTENT OF AGREEMENT RE. THE CONCEPTION OF ŚŪNYATĀ

That all is transitory and all is egoless sometimes expressed by the words *sarvaṃ śūnyam* (all is essenceless) formed the subject of keen controversies among the various sects. The differences of opinion centred round the extent to which the transitory nature of the world should be carried. The Hinayānists remained satisfied with a simple definition of Śūnya, declaring that as the world is void of individuality or anything belonging to an individuality, it is called śūnya (*yasmā ca suññam attena va attaniyena va tasmā suñño loko ti vuccatī ti*). In other words, they say that as there is nothing permanent or personal in this world, the world is devoid of any substantiality. The Mahāyānists, especially the Mādhyamikas, however, would not stop there. They would carry the conception of Śūnya to its farthest limits, arriving at the Śūnyatā of not only the apparent existences but also of the so-called Tathāgata,<sup>4</sup> Nirvāṇa, or Ākāśa.

<sup>1</sup> Sogen in his *Systems of Buddhistic Thought* (pp. 7 ff) takes Sarvaṃ anityam and Sarvaṃ anātmam and Nirvāṇam śāntam as the threefold cornerstone upon which rest both Hinayānism and Mahāyānism. Strictly speaking, Anitya and Anātma do not find place in the Mahāyānic conception of Śūnyatā or Tathatā, the ultimate truth. In fact, Sarvaṃ tathātvam (all is such as it is) replaces the former two in Mahāyāna.

<sup>2</sup> *M. Vr.*, p. 521; Burnouf, *Intro.*, p. 519.

<sup>3</sup> *Itiv.*, p. 37; *Ud.*, p. 80.

<sup>4</sup> *Sāta.*, p. 120: Nāmamātram idaṃ yaduta Buddha iti.



They add that the Tathāgatas never trouble themselves about these terms, which to them are as meaningless as the self-contradictory expression like 'the son of a barren woman'.<sup>1</sup> The usual way in which they speak of the non-existence of anything is

Na śūnyatayā rūpaṃ śūnyaṃ, nānyatra rūpāt śūnyatā, rūpaṃ eva śūnyatā, śūnyataiva rūpaṃ (form is not devoid of śūnyatā, śūnyatā is not outside form, form is śūnyatā, and śūnyatā is form).<sup>2</sup>

It is remarkable that this form of generalisation of the śūnyatā has been resorted to not only by the early Mahāyānists in the *Prajñāpāramitās* but also by the Mādhyamikas<sup>3</sup> and the Yogācāras.<sup>4</sup> An attempt has been made to show with the help of this passage that though śūnyatā seems to be the ultimate abstraction of all dharmas (things), it is actually the name which is given to the real *svabhāva* (nature) of things (dharmas or dravyas). It is *dharmatā* in the sense that it is neither apart from the dharma nor identical with it. If we say that it is apart from dharma, then the dharmas would be void, and if we say it is identical with dharma then the dharmas would be nitya (permanent). This conception of Śūnyatā is only foreshadowed, but does not appear in a developed form in Pāli literature in passages like—

Avyākataṃ mayā taṃ jīvaṃ taṃ sarīraṃ or aññaṃ jīvaṃ aññaṃ sarīraṃ. Hoti tathāgato param maraṇā; na hoti tathāgato param maraṇā; hoti ca na hoti ca tathāgato param maraṇā; n' eva hoti na na hoti tathāgato param maraṇā".<sup>5</sup> (It has not been explained by me whether soul is the same

<sup>1</sup> *Laṅkā.*, p. 19: Alabdhātmaka dharmāḥ katame yaduta śāśakharoṣ-tra-vājivisaṇa-bandhyāputra-prabhṛtayo dharmāḥ.

<sup>2</sup> *Sāta.*, p. 118: rūpaṃ (lit. form=material constituents of a body) has been taken here as X, i.e., any term may be put for it. In the *Pañcaviṃśati* (leaf 72b), 'Māyā' has been used for 'Śūnyatā' in a formula exactly like this.

<sup>3</sup> *M. Vr.*, p. 248.

<sup>4</sup> *Sūtrā.*, p. 76. In the *Vijñaptimātratā*, śūnyatā is the same as bhūta-tathatā.

<sup>5</sup> See, e.g., *Dīgha*, I, p. 188; Anesaki takes the word 'Tathāgato' in stead of 'Buddha' as significant. See *E.R.E.*, vol. iv, p. 836.



as body or different from it; neither has it been explained by me whether Tathāgata exists or does not exist after death, or whether Tathāgata not-exists or not not-exists after death).

These expressions, which receive no more than bare mention in the Pāli literature under the belief that their true sense can only be comprehended by one who has risen to the highest state of sanctification, served, however, as a basis for many of the speculations of the later Buddhists. The Yogācārins recognise that the truth is beyond the four limitations, viz., the same or different or both or non-both, i.e., it does not admit of the questions of existence or non-existence.<sup>1</sup> But this recognition did not deter them from conceiving a Tathāgata-garbha, the "Womb of the Universe," or "the transcendental soul of man just coming under the bondage of karmic causation".<sup>2</sup> The Mādhyamikas, who are too severe in their logical conclusions, consider that the four limitations are so many impossibilities and that any discussion about them is like the discussion about the 'colour of the son of a barren woman'; and it is for this reason that they add that Buddha had no other alternative than to say that they are indeterminable (avyākṛta).<sup>3</sup> The limitations, however, helped the Mādhyamikas in building their theory of Śūnyatā as an impersonal absolute principle, regarding which the above mentioned fourfold inquiry is inadmissible.

#### AGREEMENT RE. THE FOUR TRUTHS AND THE CAUSAL LAW

Though the Hīnayānists and the Mahāyānists did not agree regarding the conception of Śūnyatā, there was no disagreement among them in regard to the fact that Buddha preached the four Truths (*Āryasatyas*) and the Causal Law (*Pratītyasamutpāda*).<sup>4</sup> The four truths, Duhkha, Samudaya,

<sup>1</sup> *Laṅkā.*, p. 96 : Catuṣṭaya-vinirmuktā tathāgatānāṃ dharmadeśanā yadutaikatvānyatvobhayānubhaya-pakṣa-vivarjitā nāstyasti-samāropā-pavāda-vinirmuktā.

<sup>2</sup> Sogen, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

<sup>3</sup> *M. Vr.*, pp. 446-47 : 14 indeterminable problems are enumerated. Cf. *Con. of N.*, pp. 44-45.

<sup>4</sup> See *Laṅkā.*, p. 96.



Nirodha, Mārga (misery, cause of misery, cessation of misery, and the path leading to the cessation of misery) and the Pratītyasamutpāda form the watchword of the Hīnayānists and hardly need any explanation for the prominence received by them in the Hīnayāna literature. But those who conceive this world as only an apparition, or as a mere delusion of the mind, must show reasons why the Truths and the Causal Law should find a place in their doctrines. Nāgārjuna devotes two chapters<sup>1</sup> to these two topics, and, at the very commencement of his chapter on Āryasatyas, he anticipates this objection and says that there would have been no Buddha, Dharma and Saṅgha, had there not been the Truths and the Causal Law, for it is through them that the ultimate truth is attained and hence they could not but have a place in their doctrines. According to him Śūnyatā is not nihilism but the absolute principle immanent in all, and hence, with it, no relation of the worldly things and usages can be established; the four Truths and the Causal Law relate to the world and are worldly. The Yogācārins hold an identical view. They have three forms of truth called Parikalpita (imaginary), Paratantra (dependent), and Pariniṣpanna (perfect or ultimate).<sup>2</sup> Their view of Śūnyatā that the world is a delusion of the mind is a pariniṣpanna truth, while the Āryasatyas and the Pratītyasamutpāda relate to the Paratantra and Parikalpita. In short, the Mahāyānists hold that the four Truths and the Causal Law are the preparatory steps indispensable to the realisation of the absolute truth. Their doctrines exist to lead the ignorant beings from ignorance to knowledge, from darkness to light, and this is effected by and through the Āryasatyas and the Pratītyasamutpāda.

Though the Causal Law is relegated by the Mahāyānists to the domain of convention, it will be observed that it received their earnest attention. Nāgārjuna opens his work with a long dissertation on the Causal Law in order to prove that the things and events, of which we are cognizant,

<sup>1</sup> *M. Vṛ.*, Ch. I & XXIV; see *infra*. Ch. III (d).

<sup>2</sup> For detailed treatment, see Ch. III (d).



are all relative, appearing and disappearing through some causes and conditions, and asserts that the moment a person realises this fact he is emancipated and knows the Truth, Śūnyatā.<sup>1</sup> The Hīnayānists and the Mahāyānists differ as regards the Truth but they agree that the Truth, as conceived by them, is attainable through the comprehension of the causal law, and so the Buddhist texts, whether Hīnayānic or Mahāyānic,<sup>2</sup> are unanimous in holding—

Yañ pratītyasamutpādaṃ paśyati sa dharmam paśyati, yo dharmam paśyati so buddham paśyati. (He who realises the causal origination of things sees the Truth; one who sees the Truth sees the Buddha.)

The formula of the Causal Law appealed so much to the Buddhists of all times and places that not only the scriptures of the Hīnayānists and the Mahāyānists but also the inscriptions of different periods record

Ye dharmā hetuprabhavā hetuṃ teṣāṃ tathāgataḥ hyavadat,  
Teṣāṃ ca yo nirodha evaṃvādī mahāśramaṇaḥ.

(The Tathāgata explained the origin of those things, which proceed from a cause. He explained their cessation as well: this is the doctrine of the great Śramaṇa).

These show that there was complete unanimity amongst all the sects with regard to the fact that Buddha preached the Causal Law and the Āryasatyas. But it has to be admitted that though the Āryasatyas, the Pratītyasamutpāda and the uncaused and uncreated Nirvāṇa find a place in the doctrines of all the schools, the standpoint from which each of them is being viewed is as apart as the poles. In fact, around these three principles have developed various conflicting opinions, giving rise to a number of schools, each trying to show that its own view of the principles is right, while the views of the others are wrong.

<sup>1</sup> Nāgārjuna even identified Pratītyasamutpāda with Śūnyatā, see *M. Vr.*, pp. 503, 542: yañ pratītyasamutpādaḥ śūnyatām tām praca-kṣmahe.

<sup>2</sup> *Majjhima*, I, p. 191; *Samyutta*, III, p. 120; *Itiv.*, p. 92; *Sad. San.* (J.P.T.S.), 1890, p. 69 *Mil.*, p. 71; *Dīgha*, II, p. 154; *Bodhic.*, p. 386; *M. Vr.*, pp. 6, 160; *Sālistambasūtra*, p. 70.



## EKAYĀNATĀ

As the Hīnayānists were confident of having preserved the original teachings of the Master, and of existing anterior to the Mahāyānists, they did not think it worth while to show the agreements and disagreements between their own doctrines and those of the Mahāyānists. But the Mahāyānists, aware of their later origin and remoteness from the Founder of their religion in point of time, could not help devoting some thought to establishing their claim as the true representatives of the Founder. They attempted to prove that the real point of view of the Founder had been missed by the Hīnayānists to whom they usually referred as Śrāvakas and Pratyekabuddhas. They did not deny the authenticity of the literature of the Hīnayānists and the doctrines propounded by them, but what they desired to prove was that Buddha knew the mediocre character of the intellect of most of his disciples and delivered some discourses in a modified form to suit their understanding while to the select few he gave out his real teachings, which became known as the Mahāyāna sūtras. They did not say that Buddha had different truths for people of different mental calibres. According to them, Buddha preached one and only one Truth and Path; but the Śrāvakas and Pratyekabuddhas see and practise only a portion of same. They are not debarred from seeing the whole truth and the real path, for many of them do so by becoming Mahāyānists after the attainment of Arhathood or Pratyekabuddhahood. They do not state that there could be two kinds of knowledge (*prajñā*), one for the Hīnayānists and another for the Mahāyānists for the realisation of the Truth; so the *Prajñāpāramitās* say in their opening verses addressed to *Prajñā*:

Buddhaiḥ pratyekabuddhaiś ca śrāvakaiś ca niṣevitā,  
Mārgas tvam ekā mokṣasya nāsty anya iti niścayaḥ.

(You are the only path leading to emancipation, there is no other. It is the path followed by Buddhas, Pratyekabuddhas and Śrāvakas alike).<sup>1</sup> The *Prajñāpāramitā* texts lay too much stress on the practice of *prajñāpāramitā*, identify-

<sup>1</sup> *Aṣṭa.*, p. 3; *Pañca.*, p. 1; *Bodhic.*, p. 430.



ing it sometimes also with the absolute truth. The texts remark in many places that the three Yānas are embodied in the *Prajñāpāramitā*, and that the achievements of the Bodhisattvas, Śrāvakas, or Pratyekabuddhas depend on the *Prajñāpāramitā*. So, according to these texts, the *Prajñāpāramitā* is the only Yāna for arriving at the Truth,<sup>1</sup> and it includes all other Yānas.

The *Saddharma-Puṇḍarīka*,<sup>2</sup> concerned as it is to prove that Hīnayāna is a stepping stone to Mahāyāna, supports this idea in these verses:—

Ekam hi yānam dvitīyam na vidyate,  
trītiyam hi naivāsti kadāci loke.  
Anyatrupāyā puruṣottamānām,  
yad yāna-nānātyupadarśayanti.  
Bauddhasya jñānasya prakāśanārtham,  
loke samutpadyati lokanāthaḥ.  
Ekam hi kāryam dvitīyam na vidyate,  
na hīnayānena nayanti Buddhāḥ.

(There is only one path, no second, never does a third exist in the world. The exhibition of the variety of Yānas is only a means adopted by the great sages. The Teacher appears in the world to give out the Buddha knowledge. He has only one object in view, and nothing else. Buddhas never lead men by an inferior path.) It states again elsewhere<sup>3</sup>:

Sa paśyati mahāprajño dharmakāyam aśeṣataḥ,  
Nāsti yānatrayam kiñcid ekayānam ihāsti tu.

(For him, the highly wise, who has seen the Dharmakāya in its fullness, there is only one Yāna and not three). But as the avowed object of the *Saddharma-Puṇḍarīka* is to show that the Śrāvakayāna was only a means (upāya) of uplift of the devotee as devised by the Teacher, it harps on the theme:

Ekam eva yānam ārabhya sattvānām dharmaṁ deśitavanto

<sup>1</sup> See, e.g., *Pañca.*, leaf 167a; *Bodhic.*, p. 431. It should be noted that the perfection in *prajñāpāramitā* means the realisation of the Absolute through the comprehension of the non-existence of things altogether.

<sup>2</sup> *Sad. P.*, p. 46.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 143.



yad idam Buddhayānam sarvajñatāparyavasānam, etc.<sup>1</sup> (it is concerning only one Yāna that the dharma has been preached, it is the Buddhayāna leading to the attainment of all-knowledge, etc.).

The object of these verses is to show that the real Truth and the real Path are one, and that which is followed by the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas is ultimately followed by Śrāvakas and Pratyekabuddhas; hence there are not, in fact, three yānas called Śrāvakayāna, Pratyekabuddhayāna, and Buddhayāna but only one Yāna and that is Buddhayāna or Mahāyāna.

#### POINTS OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE TWO YĀNAS MENTIONED IN THE MAHĀYĀNIC TEXTS

Some of the Mahāyānic texts have also attempted to prove the simultaneous origin and the essential unity of Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna by bringing out the points of agreement existing between the two Yānas. The (Tibetan) *Madhyamakāvatāra* remarks on the basis of Nāgārjuna's statement in his *Mādhyamika-sūtras* about the conception of Śūnyatā of the Hīnayānists and the Mahāyānists that "it is the same śūnyatā (vacuity) whether it be in the sense of destruction or of non-origin" and takes this fact as a proof of the simultaneous origin of Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna.<sup>2</sup> The *Sūtrālaṅkāra*<sup>3</sup> also attempts to prove that there is only one yāna, not two or three, and that Hīnayāna is not altogether different from Mahāyāna. Its object is to show that the only Yāna (*Ekayāna*) is really Mahāyāna, the other two Yānas being subservient to it. It points out that there

<sup>1</sup> *Sad. P.*, p. 41, see also *Śikṣā.*, pp. 95-6: "I have never preached the law in separate forms, one for Śrāvakas, one for Pratyekabuddhas and one for Bodhisattvas."

<sup>2</sup> La Vallée Poussin's Fr. transl. in the *Le Muséon*, VIII, (N.S.), p. 271: "Ce point est enseigné par (Nāgārjuna) notre maître, quand il dit: Le Grand Véhicule enseigne la non-naissance, l'autre Véhicule la destruction; c'est la même vacuité dans la sens de destruction et de non-naissance". Cf. *Madhyamaka Sāstra*, XV, 7; *M. Vr.*, p. 269, Kātyāyanāvavāde cāstīti nāstīti cobhayam, pratisiddham bhagavatā bhāvābhāvavibhāvinā. Cf. also *Samyutta*, II, p. 17.

<sup>3</sup> *Sūtrā.*, pp. 68-70.



are many things common to the Hinayānists and the Mahāyānists, some of which are:

(i) Sameness of the *dharmadhātu* (totality of existence or things), i.e., the Śrāvakas and Bodhisattvas emanate from the identical *dharmadhātu*.<sup>1</sup>

(ii) Sameness of *nairātmya* (absence of any substance). The Śrāvakas assert the absence of substance (*ātmābhāva*), the difference between the Śrāvakas and Bodhisattvas being that the former apply it to Pudgala (person) only, while the latter apply it to both Pudgala and Dharma (world).

(iii) Sameness of *vimukti* (liberation). It refers to the *kleśa-vimukti* (abandonment of passions) which is sought for by both the Śrāvakas and Bodhisattvas, the latter seeking something more, viz., the *Jñeyāvaraṇa-vimukti* (abandonment of the screen obstructing knowledge).

(iv) In spite of the *gotrabheda* (difference in gotras), there are many who are of the Aniyata-gotras and become Mahāyānists. The Aniyata-gotras include two classes of individuals, one class prone to become Śrāvakas and the other Bodhisattvas. Many of the former class are attracted to Mahāyāna, while those of the latter are not allowed to slip (*saṁdhāraṇāya*) from Mahāyāna.<sup>2</sup>

(v) Though Buddhas and Śrāvakas have two different *āśayas*, still there is a point of contact between the two. On the one hand, Buddhas identify themselves with all beings, while on the other, those of the Śrāvaka-gotras, before they turn definitely to Śrāvaka-yāna, perform meritorious deeds which enable them to attain Bodhi, and also cherish a desire (*āśaya*) to become Buddha.<sup>3</sup> There is no difference between Buddhas and Śrāvakas in the matter of getting release from the series of births. Hence, after obtaining release, the Śrāvakas develop a desire (*āśaya*),

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Kāś. P.* p. 116, § 80; *Kārikā* (A.S.B. ms.), leaf 2a:  
Dharmadhātor asambhedāt gotrabhedo na yujyate;  
Adheyadharmabhedāt tu tad bhedaḥ parigīyate. 39.

<sup>2</sup> See *Sūtrā.*, p. 69, v. 54.

<sup>3</sup> Prof. Lévi corrects the reading of the text from 'anātmani buddhāśaya' to 'ātmani buddhāśaya'. See his *Transl.*, p. 125, fn.



through the grace and influence of Buddhas, to become Buddhas, and ultimately the two āśayas become identical and so there is only one Yāna.

(vi) Buddha's exhibition of attainment of *parinirvāṇa* through Śrāvakayāna. It refers to the fact of Buddha's attaining Mahāparinirvāṇa as conceived by the Hīnayānists. The Mahāyānists usually explain it away by saying that it was the parinirvāṇa of the Nirmāṇakāya of the real Buddha, but the text here takes it as a point of contact between Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna.

(vii) Ultimateness (*paryantāt*) of the Mahāyāna, *i.e.*, as there is nothing beyond Mahāyāna, so it is the only Yāna, Śrāvakayāna making only some progress towards it.

The above arguments of Asaṅga adduced by him to demonstrate the agreements between Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna are more or less laboured. His idea clearly is that there is only one Yāna properly so called, *viz.*, the Mahāyāna and that the Śrāvakas pass through a course of Śrāvakahood only to take to Mahāyāna in order to become Buddhas in course of time. The commentator explains it by a reference to the *Śrīmālāsūtra*, in which it has been stated that a Śrāvaka becomes a Pratyekabuddha, and ultimately a Buddha.<sup>1</sup>

The *Laṅkāvatāra*<sup>2</sup> is more emphatic in its assertion that all Yānas are one and the same. Its point of view, however, is quite different, for all its remarks are made mainly from the pure Yogācāra standpoint that everything is mental delusion. It establishes the fact that all Yānas are essentially one and that they have been looked upon as different only because of their suitability to people according to the degree of progress made by them in mental and spiritual development. It says—

Triyānam ekayānam ca ayānam ca vadāmyaḥam,  
Bālānāṃ mandabuddhīnāṃ āryānāṃ ca viviktatām.

<sup>1</sup> *Sūtrā.*, p. 70: tam avasthātrayasthaṃ saṃdhāyoktaṃ Bhagavatā Śrīmālāsūtre, śrāvako bhūtvā pratyekabuddho bhavati punaś ca Buddha iti.

<sup>2</sup> *Laṅkā.*, pp. 65, 243.



Dvāraṃ hi paramārthasya vijñaptidvayavarjitaṃ,  
Yānatrayavyavasthānaṃ nirābhāse sthite kutaḥ.

[On account of the distinction existing among the ignorant, the dullards and the sages, I speak of Triyāna, Ekayāna, or Ayāna, (*i.e.*, absence of any yāna) as the entrance leading to Paramārtha, (*i.e.*, the absolute truth), which is devoid of the two kinds of designations (*vijñapti*); in the absence of appearances (*nirābhāse*) how can this discrimination of three yānas stand.] Still more philosophical is its definition of Ekayāna, when it says<sup>1</sup> that the realisation of Ekayāna means the cessation of all thought-creations (*vikalpa*) by thoroughly comprehending that the subject and the object are mere delusions. This, according to the text, was discovered for the first time by Buddha; it was not known to the non-buddhists, Śrāvakas, or Pratyekabuddhas; hence it should be called Ekayāna.

MAHĀYĀNA IS NOT THE ORIGINAL BUDDHISM BUT A LATER AND  
MORE DEVELOPED STAGE OF SAME

From the standpoint of Mahāyānic philosophy, the three yānas may be essentially one, but the philosophic expositors of *Ekayānatā* never saw eye to eye with the Hīnayānists, and expressed their feelings for the latter in disparaging terms. The Hīnayānists, however, literally obeyed the dictum of the Teacher, *attānaṃ na ukkaṃseti paraṃ na vambheti* (neither praise yourself nor disparage others) and did not choose to embody in their literature condemnations of their opponents. It cannot, however, be denied that Mahāyāna had in it some features and principles for which it can rightly claim superiority over Hīnayāna in some directions. Its wider outlook with the great emphasis laid on *Maitrī* and *Karuṇā* and its attempt to put together in as perfect a manner as possible the philosophical truths can claim for it a superior position in regard to Hīnayāna, but it should be remembered that Mahāyāna is an advanced stage of Buddhism; in fact, it is

<sup>1</sup> *Laṅkā.*, pp. 133: Ekayānamārgādhigamāvabodhaḥ katamo yaduta grāhyagrāhakavikalpa-yathābhūtāvasthānād apravṛtter vikalpasyaika-yānāvabodhaḥ. See also p. 155.



a later phase of Buddhistic thought and religion, an outcome of the Buddhistic culture of two or three centuries. The relation of Hīnayāna to Mahāyāna has been happily expressed by Dr. Maeda thus:—"The teachings of Śākyamuni are the seeds, those of Hīnayāna are the branches and leaves, those of Mahāyāna are the blossoms and fruits. Long after the seeds were hidden away and when the time was ripe, the fruit appeared". According to Dr. Murakami<sup>1</sup> "Buddha did not necessarily teach Hīnayāna or Mahāyāna, as these are designations invented later. What was really preached by Buddha himself was primitive Buddhism in which there was yet no differentiation". Even the Āgamas of Hīnayāna Buddhism, in his opinion, do not preserve all the features of early Buddhism, as they were compiled some centuries after Buddha, but yet they contain more primitive Buddhism than other scriptural texts. Drs. Anesaki and Chuki Tominaga also agree that Mahāyāna cannot have historically a direct relation to Śākyamuni<sup>2</sup>.

ATTEMPTS TO PROVE THAT MAHĀYĀNA WAS DERIVED DIRECTLY  
FROM ŚĀKYAMUNI:

There are however scholars, both ancient and modern, who are not willing to accept the unpleasant truth that Mahāyāna is not derived from Śākyamuni directly. The ancient scholars take shelter in scholastic arguments to oppose the inference, while the modern rely with the same object on a few traditions preserved in the literatures of Japan and India.

I. ASAṄGA

Asaṅga in the first chapter of his *Sūtrālaṅkāra*<sup>3</sup> puts forward these arguments: "If it be a fact that Mahāyāna

<sup>1</sup> Vide his article on Mahāyāna in the *Eastern Buddhist*, I, ii, pp. 1, 2.

<sup>2</sup> The opinions of the Japanese scholars have been taken from the paper of Mr. R. C. Armstrong on "*The discussion of the origin of Mahāyāna Buddhism*" in the *Eastern Buddhist*, IV, i.

<sup>3</sup> *Sūtrā.*, pp. 3, 4. This passage of the *Sūtrālaṅkāra* is cited also in the Chinese commentary of the *Vijñaptimātratāsiddhi* for proving the authenticity of Mahāyāna. See Prof. Poussin's French translation of the Chinese commentary, pp. 176-78.



was not preached by Buddha and that it was invented (utpāditam) by some body at a later time, then it would be a danger (antarāya) to the excellent religion (saddharma), and it should have been foretold by Buddha as one of the many dangers that might befall his religion in future (anāgata-bhayas),<sup>1</sup> but it was not. It appears that Mahāyāna originated at the same time with Hīnayāna and not afterwards; then why should it not be regarded as based on Buddhavacana. Mahāyāna is a sublime and profound religion and so it cannot be understood by tārīkikas (sceptical dialecticians). It is also not correct to say that it was uttered by some body other than Buddha, for it does not appear in the Śāstras of the non-Buddhists (tīrthikas), and even if the tīrthikas are told of it, they do not believe it. If we admit that it was said by some body other than Śākyamuni, then it must have been uttered by some one who had attained Bodhi. In that case also it is Buddhavacana, for he who after realising Bodhi has uttered this is a Buddha. If the existence of the Mahāyāna be denied, then there cannot exist a Śrāvakayāna, because Śrāvakayāna is Buddhavacana and it is not proper to say that there is no Mahāyāna (or Buddhayāna), for there cannot arise a Buddha without a Buddhayāna. It is also Buddhavacana in view of the fact that the unconditioned knowledge (sarvanirvikalpa-jñāna) attainable through Mahāyāna operates as an antidote to all kleśas. This scholastic reasoning of Asaṅga may have a value of its own but it does not establish the simultaneous origin of Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna.

## II. ŚĀNTIDEVA

Śāntideva, in his *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, adduces reasons different from those of Asaṅga to establish the authenticity of the Mahāyāna scriptures. His attempt is more to challenge the authenticity of the Hīnayāna Āgamas than to establish the aforesaid point. He says that the statement found in the *Prajñāpāramitās* that all the three yānas have been

<sup>1</sup> For a note on the Anāgatabhayas, see Lévi's French Translation of *Sūtrā.*, pp. 6, 7 fn.



preached in them (atra prajñāpāramitāyāṃ sarvāni trīṇi yānāni vistareṇopadiṣṭāni) is not accepted by the Hīnayānists, for the latter deny the authenticity of the Mahāyāna scriptures. To establish the authenticity of their own Āgamas, the first argument advanced by the Hīnayānists is this, that with regard to the authenticity of the Hīnayāna scriptures, the Mahāyānists have nothing to say by way of objection, while the Hīnayānists do not accept the scriptures which the Mahāyānists accept as the authentic utterances of Buddha himself. But the argument for establishing the authenticity of the scriptures on the acceptance of the same by persons (in this case the Hīnayānists or the Mahāyānists) is considered worthless by the Mahāyānists. The second argument put forward by the Hīnayānists is that their Āgamas have been handed from teacher to pupil and that it satisfies the conditions laid down by Buddha as proofs of authenticity, viz., that it agrees with the *Sūtra*, it can be traced (saṃdrśyate) in the *Vinaya*, and that it is not in conflict with the causal origin of things (dharmatā<sup>1</sup>, i.e., pratītyasamutpāda). But this argument also falls through on account of the fact that the Mahāyānists also can quote a similar passage from the *Adhyāśaya-saṃcodanā-sūtra* of theirs. The third argument of the Hīnayānists is that the authenticity of their scriptures is acknowledged not only by the Hīnayānists and the Mahāyānists but also by the non-Buddhists. This again is met by the Mahāyānists, who argue that the *Vedas* and such other literature would also then be accepted as authentic. The fourth and the last argument of the Hīnayānists is that as regards their scriptures, there are no differences of opinion, while there are many in regard to the Mahāyāna scriptures. This is answered by the Mahāyānists by pointing out that, leaving out of account the non-Buddhists such as the Mīmāṃsakas, the Hīnayānists themselves are not unanimous in their opinion about their scriptures, as they are divided into

<sup>1</sup> *Bodhic.*, p. 431: Yac ca sūtre' vatarati, vinaye ca saṃdrśyate, dharmatām ca na vilomayati, tad Buddhavacanam nānyad; see also *Sūtrā.*, p. 5; cf. *Dīgha*, II; p. 124: Tāni padavyañjanāni sutte c'eva oṭaranti vinaye ca sandissanti, etc.



eighteen sects (bheda); the division does not stop there, the commentator adds, because in each sect (bheda) again, there are differences of opinion according as one is a Sautrāntika (one who studies the *Sūtras* only), an Ābhidharmika (one who studies the *Abhidharma* only), or a Vainayika (one who studies the *Vinaya* only)<sup>1</sup>. The Hīnayānists, therefore, should give up their *Sūtras*, *Vinaya*, and *Abhidharma*. This fact shows the unsoundness of the Hīnayānic argument that their scriptures have been handed down faithfully from teacher to pupil. Moreover, there should not be any disagreement regarding Buddha- or Sarvajña-vacana if they have been faithfully preserved. Śāntideva's arguments may show the anomaly of the position of the Hīnayānists, but they do not establish his proposition that the Mahāyāna scriptures originated with Buddha.

#### THE JAPANESE SCHOLARS ON THE AUTHENTICITY OF MAHĀYĀNA

Let us now see what the modern scholars have to say about the authenticity of Mahāyānism and Mahāyāna scriptures. Mr. Suzuki takes to a line of reasoning different from those of the ancient scholars. He tries to draw an analogy between Buddhism and Christianity and says that if Protestantism be the genuine teaching of Jesus of Nazareth then Mahāyāna Buddhism is also the genuine teaching of Buddha Śākyamuni. This sort of argument may well serve Mr. Suzuki in a controversy with an orthodox advocate of Protestantism speaking on Mahāyāna, but in historical criticism, it has no weight. However, he reveals the real state of things when he points out in another place that Mahāyānism is not a fossilised but a living religion like Christianity and though some "changes it has made during its historical evolution, its spirit and central ideas are all those of its founder". He states further that if we take the term "genuine" to mean a lifeless preservation of the

<sup>1</sup> For detailed discussion on the division of monks belonging to the same sect, see my *Early History etc.*, p. 207; *Laṅkā.*, (B.T.S. ed.) pp. 135, 137.



original, then Mahāyānism is not the genuine teaching of Buddha, but “the Mahāyānists would be proud of the fact, because being a living religious force, it would never condescend to be the corpse of a bygone faith”. Ultimately he says “What does it matter, then, whether or not Mahāyānism is the genuine teaching of Buddha”<sup>1</sup>.

Mr. Suzuki admits, therefore, that Mahāyāna may not be the teaching of Buddha, but Mr. Kimura, without denying the fact that the “Mahāyāna *sūtras* and the statements embodied therein undoubtedly came into being after Buddha’s death”, puts forward his theory about the possession of two kinds of “perception” by Buddha, Mahāyāna representing the “introspectional or esoteric” side of the “perception” and Hīnayāna the “phenomenological or exoteric” side<sup>2</sup>. He believes that Buddha imparted his introspectional teachings to the select few among his disciples, preaching his ‘phenomenological’ teachings to all the rest. This theory is based partly on the traditions to the same effect preserved in Japan and partly on an uncritical acceptance of some of the statements relating to Sāṃvṛta and Paramārtha truths found in the early Mahāyāna treatises, specially the *Saddharma-Puṇḍarīka*. There could be no objection to accept Mr. Kimura’s view if he could point out the “advanced and brilliant disciples” who “rightly grasped Buddha’s introspectional ideas” and of which they made an exposition resulting in the development of “Mahāyānic ideas”. If Śāriputra, Subhūti, Mahāmaudgalyāyana were not able to grasp Buddha’s ontological teachings as the *Saddharma-Puṇḍarīka* actually states, then who were the others able to do so? They certainly cannot be the Bodhisattvas, who have the appearance of fictitious figures even in the Mahāyāna literature. In fact, the interlocutors in the early Mahāyāna treatises, such as the *Prajñāpāramitās*, are the Hīnayāna savants, Śāriputra, Subhūti, etc., and the names

<sup>1</sup> Suzuki, *Outlines of Mahāyāna Buddhism*, p. 16.

<sup>2</sup> Evidently Mr. Kimura has in his mind the Paramārtha- and Sāṃvṛti-satyas. For Mr. Kimura’s statements, see *Journal of Letters* (Calcutta University), vol. xii, pp. 47, 59, 65. For the two Satyas see Chapter III (d).



that we most frequently come across in the Mahāyāna works are those of the prominent figures of the Hīnayāna literature. No student of history will probably believe the statement of the *Prajñāpāramitās* that these disciples delivered the Mahāyāna teachings only by being inspired by Buddha<sup>1</sup> and without properly grasping them. Japanese traditions, which are relied upon in this connection to establish the authenticity of the Mahāyāna, reveal, I think, the actual state of things. They accord priority of origin to Hīnayāna, as will be seen from the following:—

(a) The Hsien Shou school thus arranges chronologically the Japanese traditions on the various forms of the Buddhist teachings:—

- (i) Siao Chiao or primitive teaching;
- (ii) Shih Chiao or the beginning of the true religion (transitional state);
- (iii) Chung Chiao or the final development of the true religion;
- (iv) Tun Chiao or the school of meditation;<sup>2</sup> and
- (v) Yuan Chiao or the complete religion of all the schools.

(b) The Tien Tai school puts the order thus:—

- (i) Tsang Chiao or primitive teaching;
- (ii) Tung Chiao or the teaching in a transitional state;
- (iii) Pieh Chiao or the new teaching; and
- (iv) Yuan Chiao or the complete religion of all the schools.<sup>3</sup>

The tradition of the Tien Tai school, however, adds that the *Avatamsaka sūtras* were preached first, but as they were not understood by the disciples, the *Āgamas* were preached.

<sup>1</sup> *Aṣṭa.*, p. 33: Sthaviraḥ Subhūtir āha. Tena hi Kauśika upadekṣyāmi te buddhānubhāvena buddhatejasā buddhādhiṣṭhānena.

<sup>2</sup> "This second school founded by the last Buddhist patriarch Ta Mo is not mentioned separately in the Tien Tai classification" T. Richard, *New Testament of Higher Buddhism*, p. 41.

<sup>3</sup> See T. Richard, *op. cit.*, p. 4; here the word "teaching" has been preferred to "Buddhism"; see also *Journal of Letters*, xii, p. 64, *Eastern Buddhist*, iv, i.



Then, after some time when Buddha had some disciples with more developed mental powers, the ontological doctrines found in the *Prajñāpāramitās* and such other works were preached. Both the traditions support the view that both the forms of teaching were delivered by Buddha within the space of forty years. The Tibetan traditions go further and state that Śākyamuni delivered his instructions on the *Prajñāpāramitā* sixteen years after the attainment of bodhi, i.e., in the fifty-first year of his age while he was dwelling on the Gr̥dhrakūṭa mountain, and add that they were compiled by Kāśyapa.<sup>1</sup> Any one who examines the style of writing and the nature of the doctrinal and other matters discussed in the *Gaṇḍavyūha*, an old treatise of the *Avatamsaka* class, can have little doubt about the posteriority of this class of literature not only to the Hīnayāna *Āgamas* or the *Nikāyas*, but also to the *Prajñāpāramitās*. Considering, for instance, the conception of the lokadhātus or the account of the existence of Buddhism in the south of India as found in the *Gaṇḍavyūha*, its composition cannot but be relegated to a time much later than the *Prajñāpāramitās*.<sup>2</sup>

The *Prajñāpāramitās* like the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā* and the *Śatasāhasrikā* occupy a position between the *Mahāvastu* and the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka* or the *Gaṇḍavyūha*. This fits in with the chronological arrangement of the Japanese traditions, if we leave out of account the statement mentioned in them that Buddha could not have any disciples able to understand the teachings embodied in the *Avatamsaka sūtras*. Thus, we find, that the traditions do not deny the priority of origin of Hīnayāna referred to as Tsang Chiao (primitive teaching). Their mention of Tung Chiao (teaching in a transitional state) is also very interesting in view of the fact that it probably refers to the various schools like the Sarvāstivādins, the Mahāsāṅghikas, the Lokottaravādins, etc., which were half-way between Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna. But Yamakami Sogen<sup>3</sup> thinks that "Harivarman's doctrine

<sup>1</sup> *As. Res.*, xx, pp. 399, 400.

<sup>2</sup> For a discussion about the time of the earliest *Prajñāpāramitā*, see my Intro. to the *Pañca*.

<sup>3</sup> Sogen, *Systems of Buddhistic Thought*, p. 173.



(Satyasiddhi school) is to be regarded as the highest point of philosophical perception attained by Hīnayānism, and in a sense it constitutes the stage of transition between Hīnayānism and Mahāyānism". But the difficulty in the way of taking the Satyasiddhi school as indicative of the transitional state of Buddhism lies in the fact that the school came into existence as late as the 3rd century A.C., when Mahāyāna had already developed. It may be taken as an attempt made by Harivarman to reconcile Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna. The third name Pieh or Chung Chiao evidently refers to the early form of Mahāyānism as found in the *Prajñāpāramitās* and the contemporaneous literature.

#### THE POLICY OF RECONCILIATION IN THE *Puṇḍarīka*

The view shared by Dr. Enryo Inouye and a few other scholars<sup>1</sup> on the strength of the Japanese traditions that Śākyamuni imparted two forms of teaching, esoteric and exoteric, is very probably derived from statements in Mahāyāna works, in which it is said that Buddha's teachings were based on two kinds of truth, conventional and transcendental, and from the *Puṇḍarīka* which seeks to maintain that Hīnayāna was only an upāya-kausālya adopted by Śākyamuni to attract people of average intellect to his teachings and then ultimately to Mahāyāna. It is well known how popular the *Puṇḍarīka* is among the Mahāyānists, and what a great influence it still exercises over their opinion. The statements are valuable from our standpoint, because their chief aim is the reconciliation of Hīnayāna with Mahāyāna. It is stated that the Hīnayānists like Śāriputra acquired merits in previous births like the Bodhisattvas, but these they cannot remember now<sup>2</sup>. It is to remind them of these merits, and also the resolutions formed by them in the previous births, that the *Puṇḍarīka* is preached to the

<sup>1</sup> See *Eastern Buddhist*, IV.

<sup>2</sup> Contrast Hardy, *Manual of Buddhism*, p. 312: Śāriputta enquired of Buddha if the Śrāvakas like him could become Buddhas. Buddha answered in the negative, saying that the Śrāvakas must complete the Pāramis.



Śrāvakas<sup>1</sup>. Though the treatise maintains throughout the superiority of the doctrines and practices of the Mahāyānists to those of the Hīnayānists, yet it does not disparage the latter as quite worthless. It tries to show that Hīnayāna is an expedient (*upāya-kauśalya*) that was adopted by Buddha to suit his disciples in a lower stage of intellectual and spiritual progress, and to serve as a step to Mahāyāna. Those who had reached the highest stage to which the practice of Hīnayāna doctrines can lead can become Mahāyānists and ultimately Buddhas. In fact, it devotes quite a large space to show how the bhikṣus, Śāriputra, Kāśyapa, Subhūti, Mahākātyāyana, Mahāmaudgalyāyana, Pūrṇa Maitrāyaṇīputra, Ānanda, Rāhula, and others, and the bhikṣuṇīs, Mahāprajāpatī Gautamī, Rāhulamātā, etc., who were held in high esteem by the Hīnayānists on account of their deep spiritual insight and high attainments, repented when they were old that they had to follow a lower course, as they did not possess the capacity to understand the covert teachings (*saṃdhābhāṣā*) of Buddha, and could not have the full benefit from his teachings. The statement is put into Śāriputra's mouth that he had been selected by the Teacher as the chief of Śrāvakas of his time. He is the eldest son born of the mouth of the Teacher (*jyeṣṭhaputra mukhajāta*), but yet he mourns for his lot that he attains Nirvāṇa (arahathood) only, and cannot become a Bodhisattva or Buddha. Then he curses himself that he has been found suitable by Buddha to be led through only a lower course of training (*hīnena yānena niryātitaḥ*). The Teacher is represented as consoling him by saying that he can never have the intention of preaching different Yānas. He has preached only one Yāna. Though he first taught Hīnayāna to some, it was to take them ultimately to Mahāyāna and make them realise Buddhahood in due course<sup>2</sup>. The *Puṇḍa-*

<sup>1</sup> *Sad. P.*, pp. 64-5: So'haṃ tvāṃ Śāriputra pūrvacaryāpranidhāna-jñānānubodham anusmārayitukāma imaṃ Saddharma-Puṇḍarīkaṃ dharma-paryāyam sūtrāntaṃ mahāvaipulyaṃ bodhisattāvavādaṃ sarva-buddhapaṇigrahaṃ śrāvakāṇāṃ saṃprakāśayāmi.

<sup>2</sup> *Sad. P.*, pp. 36, 38, 60, 61; *Sata.*, p. 502; *Pañca.* (A.S.B. ms.), leaf 231b.



*rīka* does not disappoint the Hīnayānists, for it holds out to them the hope that they will become Buddha provided they perform the duties enjoined upon a Bodhisattva. As they have already attained the qualities pertaining to arhathood, it would not be difficult for them to perform the pāramitās, develop Bodhicitta, worship and serve the innumerable Tathāgatas, build stūpas, etc., and thus ultimately reach Buddhahood. The treatise, proceeding further, predicts regarding each of the noted bhikṣus the time when he will become a Buddha, what name he will bear, and over which lokadhātu he will preside<sup>1</sup>. It also states that the bhikṣus, who had become old and decrepit and had therefore no aspiration (*sprhā*) for Buddhahood or for powers pertaining to it, will not be left aside. They are like a poor man who had long been separated from his father and was not aware of his vast wealth. He would not believe that he would inherit this wealth. Similarly these Śrāvakas, though devoid of desire or energy for attaining the glory of Buddhahood, will still obtain it as their birthright.<sup>2</sup> There is also a reference to another class of bhikṣus who will, in future, be Śrāvakas, be satisfied with their parinirvāṇa and not aspire to

<sup>1</sup> *Sad. P.*, pp. 65, 144, 148, 150, 152, 201. Śāriputra after following the Saddharma of countless Tathāgatas, worshipping them in various ways, and fulfilling the Bodhisattvacaryās, will become Padmaprabhā Tathāgata, and preside over the Buddhakṣetra called Viraja. Similarly will Kāśyapa and others as stated below :

Kāśyapa—Rāsmiprabhā Tathāgata—Avabhāsaprāpta Buddhakṣetra.

Subhūti—Śaśiketu Tathāgata—Ratnasambhava Buddhakṣetra.

Mahākātyāyana—Jāmbunadaprabhāsa Tathāgata—Buddhakṣetra not mentioned.

Mahāmaudgalyāyana—Tamālapatracandanagandha Tathāgata—Manobhirāma Buddhakṣetra

Pūrṇa Maitrāyaṇīputra—Dharmaprasāda Tathāgata—Buddhakṣetra not mentioned.

In pages 309–310, Buddha foretells regarding 300 bhikṣus that they have the āśaya for Buddhahood but they are not at present aware of same. They will, however, develop Bodhicitta after ages and attain Buddhahood.

Compare *Laṅkā.*, p. 240: Arhantaḥ punar Bhagavata vyākṛtā aputtarāyāṃ samyak sambodhau; *Pañca.* (A.S.B. ms). leaf 231b.

<sup>2</sup> *Sad. P.*, pp. 100, 101.



Bodhisattvahood. They will be reborn in the lokadhātus where Śākyamuni Buddha will appear under other names, and where they will develop under his influence a desire for Tathāgatajñāna and ultimately win it<sup>1</sup>. The following beautiful simile used in the treatise shows in a concrete form the object which it has in view, viz., that every Hīnayānist is to become a Buddha, though he may not strive for it or may think it beyond his power to attain it. A guide was leading a large number of men through an extensive forest to Mahāratnadvīpa. After travelling some distance, they became tired and alarmed, and wanted to return. The accomplished guide, quick in devising means (*upāya-kusāla*), brought into being a country by dint of his supernatural powers and asked them to take rest there. When the people were refreshed after rest, the guide caused the country to disappear, told them that it was only a magical creation of his, and that they should now proceed to Mahāratnadvīpa. The magical country is the Hīnayānic Nirvāṇa, while the Mahāratnadvīpa is the ultimate goal (*i.e.*, Buddhahood)<sup>2</sup>. Such similes make the object of the treatise apparent. It does not deny the priority of Hīnayāna, but it wants to relegate it to a position subservient to Mahāyāna, implying that the real teaching of Buddha was not Hīnayāna but Mahāyāna.

TWO HĪNAYĀNA STATEMENTS UTILISED TO PROVE THAT MAHĀYĀNA IS THE GENUINE TEACHING OF BUDDHA

The *Saddharma-Puṇḍarīka* utilises two statements found in the Hīnayāna literature for proving that Mahāyāna is genuine, and contains the most important teachings of Buddha:

(i) The first is that Buddha, just after attaining bodhi, was hesitating as to whether he should preach the truth, or proceed to attain Nirvāṇa. In the *Ariyapariyesana-sutta*<sup>3</sup> it is stated that the Truth (dharma) is deep and abstruse; it is excellent and beyond the range of dialectics; it

<sup>1</sup> *Sad. P.*, pp. 186 ff.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 188.

<sup>3</sup> *Majjhima*, I, pp. 160-175; *Dīgha*, II, p. 36; *Atthasālinī*, p. 35; *Mtu.*, III, pp. 314 f., *Lal. Vis.*, pp. 395-396; *Divyā.*, p. 492; *M. Vr.*, p. 498.



can be understood by the wise only. People are addicted to desires and will hardly be able to understand the Paṭi-ccasamuppāda or Nirodha; so the preaching of the truth would be of no avail, as nobody would understand him, and his labours would be thrown away. Cognizant of these thoughts passing through Buddha's mind, Brahmā appears and requests him to preach the truth, saying that though Magadha is full of impure religions, still there are beings with higher faculties and powers of vision, and the preaching of the Truth would save them from the miseries of the world, leading them to the haven of quietude. Buddha realised the value of Brahmā's words and decided to preach the Truth.

(ii) The second statement is that Buddha does not preach the Truth in a uniform manner.<sup>1</sup> After observing the mental proclivities and capabilities of the persons to whom he desired to impart religious lessons he selected discourses appealing to their minds, and thus initiated them into the Truth. To a householder, he would first preach the *dānakathā*, *sīlakathā*, *saggakathā*, *kāmānam ādīnavam okāram saṃkilesam*, *nekkhamme ānisaṃsam* (discourses on almsgiving, moral precepts, heavens, perils, corruptions, impurities of desires and the blessings of retirement). He would prepare the mind of a brahmin student by holding conversation with him on topics relating to sacrifice, caste-system and the like, and would deliver the Truth in a form suited to the mentality of the brahmin. To a husbandman he would preach the Truth through similes or topics relating to the tilling of lands, and so forth.<sup>2</sup> It was only when he perceived that the minds of his hearers were sufficiently prepared that he would deliver the higher teachings, viz., *dukkha*, *samudaya*,

<sup>1</sup> See Ch. III (d), for the conventional and real teachings.

<sup>2</sup> *Majjhima*, Āsayānusayam veditvā dhammam deseti; *Divyā.*, p. 97 : Atha Bhagavā teṣāṃ āsayānuśayam veditvā dhātum prakṛtiṃ ca jñātvā tādrśī dharmadeśanā karoti; p. 463 : Bhagavatā teṣāṃ karṣakāṇāṃ āsayānuśayam dhātum prakṛtiṃ ca jñātvā dharmadeśanā kṛtā. See also pp. 124, 550-1, 554.

*Sutta Nipāta*, Dhaniya Sutta; *Dīgha*, Ambaṭṭha Sutta; *Vinaya*, I, pp. 15f.-Yasapabbajjā; *Mtu.*, III, pp. 408, 413; *Ava. S.*, II, p. 26.



*nirodha*, *magga* (misery of beings; how it originates, i.e., the theory of causation; how it can be destroyed; and the various practices to which one must resort for achieving the goal), which, according to the Hīnayānists, were the highest and the most profound (*sāmukkaṃsika dhammadesanā*) teachings of Buddha.<sup>1</sup>

The first statement cited above that Buddha was wavering just after attaining Bodhi as to whether he should live in peace in a solitary place, or go out to preach the abstruse doctrines found out by him, has been taken by the *Puṇḍarīka* as an admission on the part of the Hīnayānists that their intellect is of a lower order. The story woven around it is that Śākyamuni came into existence when one of the five *kaṣāyas*<sup>2</sup> (evils) or the sixty-two wrong views like 'nityam astīti nāstīti tathāsti nāsti'<sup>3</sup> prevailed, when men were overwhelmed by *trṣṇā* (desire), *moha* (delusion) and *kāma* (passion) and did not possess the merits usually acquired by Bodhisattvas in their previous lives (*cirṇacaryā purimaḥjātiṣu*). When the evils were raging over the land, Buddha at Brahmā's request came out to preach the religion, but found the vision of his audience too dim to get an insight into his abstruse doctrines. There was even the likelihood of their incurring sin by scoffing at these doctrines. Hence he thought it wiser to follow the previous Buddhas by devising some means to impart the Truth robed in different forms. The people inspired as they were by lower aims (*hīnādhimukta*) would not strive heartily if they were asked to aspire to Buddhahood. He therefore proceeded to Benares and preached to the five monks the dharma of quietude (*dharmam praśāntabhūmiṃ*)<sup>4</sup> and of which, the Nir-

<sup>1</sup> *Dīgha*, I, p. 148; *Vinaya*, I, pp. 15 ff; VI, p. 248; *Majjhima*, I, p. 380.

<sup>2</sup> *Kalpakaṣāya*, *Sattvakaṣāya*, *Kleśakaṣāya*, *Dṛṣṭikaṣāya*, *Āyukaṣāya*—*Sad. P.*, pp. 31, 43, 58, 162, 167, 192; *Lal. Vis.*, p. 248; *Kośa*, III, 94, p. 193; *Samādhirājasūtra* (B.T.S.), p. 9; *Mtu.*, III, p. 317.

<sup>3</sup> *Sad. P.*, p. 48; *Dīgha*, *Brahmajāla Sutta*.

<sup>4</sup> According to the Hīnayānists, *dukkhaṃ*, *samudayaṃ*, *nirodhaṃ*, *maggam* were the *sāmukkaṃsika dhammadesanā* (see *Majjhima*, I, p. 380), while according to the *Sad. P.* (p. 60), *Buddhajñāna* was the *sāmutkarsikī dharmadesanā*.



vāṇa, as conceived by the Hīnayānists, was the highest goal. Later on (paścime ca kāle), when he found some excellent men (putrān dvipadottamān), who had already been working through many rebirths to attain the highest Bodhi, he thought it fit to preach his excellent religion (sāmutkarṣiki dharmadeśanā) relating to the attainment of Buddhajñāna.<sup>1</sup> This was, however, preached in such a language that it could not be understood by the untrained.<sup>2</sup> The *Puṇḍarīka* goes to the length of saying that it was beyond the comprehension of Śrāvakas and Pratyekabuddhas.<sup>3</sup> The *Prajñāpāramitā* proceeds so far as to state that the collective prajñā of countless Maudgalyāyanas and Śāriputras would not be an infinite part of the prajñā of a Bodhisattva who has practised the prajñāpāramitā.<sup>4</sup>

The second statement of the Hīnayānists, that Buddha preaches his dharma in a way suited to the tendencies and capabilities of the hearers, has given opportunity to the *Puṇḍarīka*<sup>5</sup> to parade the intellectual superiority of the Mahāyānists over the Hīnayānists. It says that Buddha preached to people his dharma by adopting hundreds of expedients (upāyakaśālyasatair anekaiḥ) after observing their mental tendencies (āśaya), their spiritual aspirations, their religious merits, and the variety of their actions (citrāṇi karmāṇi). To make his dharma universally attractive, he had recourse to various kinds of expressions, reasonings, and illustrations, and in fact, it was with this object that his teachings were imparted in nine

<sup>1</sup> *Sad. P.*, pp. 55-57, 60.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 59: Bahūni saṁdhāvacanehi coktaṁ durbodhyam etaṁ hi aśikṣitehi.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19, 31, 70: Gambhīraṁ durdarśaṁ duranubodhaṁ Buddhajñānaṁ..... sarvaśrāvaka-pratyekabuddhaiḥ. Cf. Hīnayāna passages: Ayam dhammo gambhīro duddaso duranubodho santo paṇīto atakkāvacaro nipuṇo paṇḍitavedaniyo (*Dīgha*, II, p. 36; *Majjhima*, I, p. 160; *Mtu.*, III, p. 314; *Divyā.*, p. 492; *Lal. Vis.*, p. 395-6.)

It will be observed that the *Sad. P.* retains the Hīnayāna passage almost verbatim replacing 'duranubodhaṁ paṇḍitavedaniyam' by 'duranubodhaṁ Buddhajñānaṁ sarvaśrāvaka-pratyekabuddhaiḥ'.

<sup>4</sup> *Sata.*, pp. 121-2.

<sup>5</sup> *Sad. P.*, pp. 71; cf. the corresponding Hīnayāna expressions, *ante*.



forms, viz., *sūtra*, *gāthā*, *itivṛttaka*, *jātaka*, *adbhuta*, *nidāna*, *aupamyā*, *citra*, and *geyya*.<sup>1</sup> It was for those who had lower aspirations, who had not performed the necessary duties under the previous Buddhas, and who were still attached to the world with its pleasures and sorrows that he had to preach how to attain Nirvāṇa only for their own selves. This was an expedient adopted by him to make them all ultimately realise the Buddhajñāna, but he never told them that they would become Buddhas, as the time was not ripe for it. Now that the time had arrived, the truth that the navāṅgas were only upāyakaśālyas for leading all men to the highest perfection was given out. As they were sons of Buddha, pure in conduct, wise and learned, and had performed duties under previous countless Buddhas, the Vaipulya Sūtras were preached to them.<sup>2</sup> Aware of the noble aspirations of these disciples, Buddha tells them that they will, in future, become Buddhas and benefactors of the world. If the Śrāvakas can retain in their memory one verse of this great śāsana, (i.e., the *Puṇḍarīka*),<sup>3</sup> they will attain Bodhi. To show that the Teacher had only one form of teaching, understood differently by different persons according to their capabilities, the treatise uses some interesting analogies, one of which is that the clouds water the trees, plants, and shrubs of the countless lokadhātus but the trees, plants, and shrubs absorb the water in different ways according to their capabilities and grow according to their sizes and species; similarly Buddha showers the dharma possessing the same qualities (*rasa*), viz., *vimuktirasa* (emancipation), *virāgarasa* (absence of attachment) and *nirodharasa* (suppression of senses), etc.,<sup>4</sup> and leading to omniscience (*sarvajña-jñāna*) but producing different results according to the capabilities of the disciples. The

<sup>1</sup> *Sad. P.*, p. 45. The enumeration is a little different from the usual. The *Pañcaviṃśati* (A.S.B. ms.) leaf 165 remarks that only five Buddhas preached in the Navāṅga form. See *ante*, pp. 7 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Note here the contradictions appearing in the text. The treatise, in fact, now attributes to the Śrāvakas all the qualities, lacking which they were in other places shown as inferior to the Bodhisattvas and unfit for hearing the Mahāyāna doctrines.

<sup>3</sup> *Sad. P.*, p. 46.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 124.



simile of the sun shedding the same kind of light over all beings has also been used to show Buddha imparting the same teachings. This could not convince some of the Śrāvakas who enquired as to why there existed distinctions as Śrāvakas, Pratyekabuddhas, and Bodhisattvas. The two analogies cannot be applied with all their implications to Buddha, for the sun or the clouds remain unconcerned about the subjects of their benefactions, while Buddha always discriminates between them according to their lower, medium, or higher aspirations,<sup>1</sup> and degrees of religious merit and capabilities. Not only this. He, in fact, did not think it desirable to teach everybody the dharma which leads to *sarvajña-jñāna* (omniscience possessed by a Buddha), for it may not conduce to the welfare of disciples not yet fit to utilize same. The treatise, therefore, uses a parable to emphasize this point, viz., that of a potter. A potter turns out of the same clay earthen pots of various descriptions, such as, curd-jar, milk-jar, and so forth, just as the dharma of Buddha passing under three names has really the same substance. This refers to one yāna explained in three ways, the Buddhabodhi delivered in three forms (Buddhabodhiṃ tridhā vibhāṣye' ha prakāśayeyam).<sup>2</sup> The parable concludes by saying that Buddha cannot be regarded as having said that he would lead some of his disciples by Hīnayāna, for that would attribute to the Teacher niggardliness (*mātsarya*), envy (*īrṣyā*), whim (*chandarāga*) and ill-will (*pāpacitta*),—which is absurd. From all this it is apparent that according to the *Saddharma-Puṇḍarīka*, Hīnayānism was really a lower form of teaching, but it was only an *upāyakaūśalya* adopted by the Teacher on account of the poverty of intellect of his early disciples.

The treatise then proceeds to remove a suspicion that might be entertained by the opponents regarding the straightforwardness of the Teacher in the adoption of the upāya-

<sup>1</sup> *Sad. P.*, p. 140 :

Anuttarāṃ Buddhabodhiṃ deśayatyagrayānike.

Prakāśayati madhyāṃ tu madhyaprajñāya nāyakaḥ,  
saṃsārabhīrave bodhiṃ anyāṃ saṃvarṇayatyapi.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 55.



**kaśālyas.** It uses a parable to explain away the suspicion. A rich old man owns a very big house which can accommodate five hundred persons, but the house has only one door, and a roof of straw (*trṇa*). Suddenly, the house catches fire, the old man comes out, but his twenty sons remain within it unmindful of the fire. He thinks that he is strong enough to bring them out safely. The father apprises them of the fire and asks them to come out but they will not believe him. As the father knows the playthings coveted by his sons, he thinks of using the expedient (*upāya-kaśālya*) of tempting his sons out of the house by offering them the toys called *Goratha*, *Ajaratha*, and *Mṛgaratha*. He places them outside the house, and the boys run to reach them. When the father sees them all out of danger, he feels happy, and gives them not the ordinary toys placed by him outside the gate but toys of immeasurable value, as he is immensely rich.<sup>1</sup> Buddha is compared here to the rich father, and the three rathas to the three yānas. The means of exit from the fire is only one and the Teacher attracts his disciples out of the fire through the exit and gives them the invaluable ratha, the *Buddhayāna*.<sup>2</sup> This illustration is open to criticism, for the Hīnayānists might say that Buddha promised one thing and gave another, and therefore, he was open to the charge of having spoken a falsehood. The treatise meets it by saying that though Buddha was speaking of three yānas, he had all along in his mind the excellent one. By all these it is sought to establish that Buddha had only one religion and it was *Mahāyāna*, but his first disciples were not intelligent enough to grasp

<sup>1</sup> This parable is also cited in the *Laṅkā.*, p. 88 :

Rājā śreṣṭhī yathā putrān vicitrair mṛṇmayair mṛgaiḥ,  
pralobhya krīḍayitvā ca bhūtān dadyāt tato mṛgān.  
tathāhaṃ lakṣaṇais citrair dharmāṇāṃ pratibimbakaiḥ,  
pratyaṭmavedyāṃ putrebhyaḥ bhūtakotiṃ vadāmy ahaṃ.

(Just as kings or rich bankers first tempt their boys by various kinds of earthen deer and then give them the real deer, so also Buddha tempts his disciples first by various appearances of dharmas and their characteristics, ultimately enabling them to know the true existence, which is realisable within one's own self.).

<sup>2</sup> *Sad. P.*, pp. 71-76.



it and what they gave out as Buddhism was really a superficial view of the religion.

#### REASONS FOR REGARDING ŚRĀVAKAYĀNA AS HĪNAYĀNA

In spite of the conciliatory attitude of the *Saddharma-Puṇḍarīka* trying to show that the Nirvāṇagāmins do ultimately become sarvajñas and that Hīnayāna was only an upāyakaśālya, it is evident that this, as also other Mahāyāna treatises, assume an air of superiority and seek to establish that Mahāyānism is far superior to Hīnayānism. There are seven features, the *Sūtrālaṅkāra* says, for which Mahāyāna should be considered great. First, its bases (ālambana) are great, for its sūtras are varied and innumerable. Secondly, its achievements (pratipatti) are great as it achieves two objects, viz., good for self and good for others. Thirdly, the knowledge imparted by it is deep for it penetrates into the non-substantiality (nairātmyabhāva) of both the individuality and the things of the world (pudgala and dharma). Fourthly, it involves great austerities because it requires strenuous application of energy for incalculable kalpas. Fifthly, it is great in its provision of expedients, for, its followers need not leave the worldly life provided they remain unattached to the world. Sixthly, its fruitions (samudāgama) are great, for it secures bala (power), vaiśāradya (self-confidence born of the highest knowledge) and eighteen āveṇikadharmas.<sup>1</sup> Seventhly, and lastly, its greatness lies in the performance of the duties of Buddha, namely the showing of the attainment of sambodhi and mahāparinirvāṇa.<sup>2</sup>

The use of the appellation Hīnayāna itself shows at a glance the low place to which the Hīnayānism was relegated by the Mahāyānists. The names, of course, that are mostly in use in the Mahāyāna scriptures are Śrāvaka and Pratyekabuddha. These are colourless names, and the Hīnayānists themselves used the term sāvaka or śrāvaka, e.g., in the expressions, pakatisāvaka, aggasāvaka, sāvakasāṅgha,

<sup>1</sup> For enumeration see *Mvyut.* 7-9.

<sup>2</sup> *Sūtrā.*, p. 171; cf. *Gaṇḍavyūha*, leaf 9b; Keith., *B. Phil.*, p. 259.



sāvika, and so forth. The Pratyeka-(Pacceka)-buddha is equally in frequent use among the Hīnayānists. The term, Hīnayāna, came into being to indicate that the Śrāvakas and Pratyekabuddhas were hīnādhimukta (of lower aims)<sup>1</sup>. They were also called Prādesīkas because their mind (citta) takes only a partial (prādesīka) and not comprehensive view of the whole truth<sup>2</sup>.

i. ĀŚAYA.

The *Sūtrālaṅkāra* shows analytically that the Śrāvakas were hīnādhimukta and in consequence thereof their exertion, instructions, merits, and fruitions were of a lower order in comparison with those of the Mahāyānists<sup>3</sup>. It is according to one's aspiration that the teaching is imparted, and it is according to the teaching that one exerts himself. He earns merit in proportion to his exertion, and bodhi in proportion to his merits, i.e., either Śrāvakabodhi, Pratyekabuddhabodhi, or Mahābodhi<sup>4</sup>. From this, it is evident that the classification hinges on the āśaya of an individual. The Śrāvaka or Pratyekabuddhayānists are looked down upon by the Mahāyānists because they desire self-emancipation only (ātmaparinirvāṇāśaya) and do not aspire to lead others to Nirvāṇa, ignoring his own self. As they seek to become only Arhats and not Buddhas for the salvation of all beings, and as they wish to possess only Dharma-cakṣu, they are of hīnādhimukti, (i.e., of low aspiration). This ideal of self-emancipation of the Hīnayānists has been condemned in no

<sup>1</sup> In the *Pug. P.* (p. 26) the term hīnādhimutta means a person who is immoral, does evil deeds and serves similar other persons. The opposite expression is Paṇītādhimutta, i.e., one who is moral (sīlavā), performs meritorious deeds, and serves similar other persons.

<sup>2</sup> See *Mvyut.* 52; *Daśa.*, p. 25; *Lal. Vis.*, p. 433. Csoma Körösi on the basis of the Tibetan rendering translates Prādesīka as "a principle lasting but one day or a very short time". He adds in the footnote that it is "a vehicle or principle observed in a particular country or province". See *Mvyut.* (A.S.B. ed.), p. 20. For Triyāna see *Sūtrā.*, p. 168; *Pañca.*, leaf 6; *Lal. Vis.*, p. 5; *Sad. P.*, pp. 45, 147.

<sup>3</sup> *Sūtrā.*, p. 4.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *Lal. Vis.*, p. 34: āśayo dharmālokaṃ mukhaṃ Hīnayāna-sprhaṇatāyai samvartate. Adhyāśayo dharmālokaṃ mukhaṃ udārabuddhadharmādyālambanatāyai samvartate.



uncertain terms as spiritual selfishness (*ādhyātmika svārtha-paratva*) by all the schools of Mahāyāna. The Mahāyānists, however unpractical they may be, cannot but be admired for their *Parārthatva*, i.e., sacrificing one's own gains for the sake of others, or ranking the acquisition of one's<sup>1</sup> own spiritual gains as subsidiary to the spiritual gains of others. The *Sūtrālaṅkāra*<sup>2</sup> uses the well-known simile in support of the greatness of the object of the Mahāyānists:

Yathā puṇyaṃ prasavate pareṣāṃ bhojanaṃ dadat,  
Na tu svayaṃ sa bhuñjānas tathā puṇyamahodayaḥ.

(As religious merit is produced by giving food to others and not by eating it, so the Mahāyānists earn more merit by helping others to attain nirvāṇa, and not by seeking it themselves like the Hīnayānists.) This ideal of the Mahāyānists is echoed in the *Bhāgavata*,<sup>3</sup> where Prahlāda says:—

Prāyeṇa devamunayaḥ svavimuktikāmā  
Maunaṃ caranti vijane na parārthanīṣṭhāḥ,  
Naitān vihāya kṛpāṇān vimumukṣa eko  
Nānyaṃ tvadasya śaraṇaṃ bhramato 'nupaśye.

(Very often, O Lord, the sages desirous of attaining their own salvation practise silence in the forests without devoting themselves to others' interests. I do not wish to have salvation for myself forsaking the others. I do not find for my bewildered self any refuge other than in you.)

The ideal of the Mahāyānists is certainly very noble, and appeals strongly to the minds of men, but their process of attaining salvation through a period covering innumerable rebirths cannot appeal to all minds. The Hīnayānists do not deny that the aspiration to become Buddha is very noble, but they think it useless and unpractical to advise persons, most of whom possess merits and capabilities far inferior to those of a bodhisattva, to strive for Buddhahood. The charge laid against the Śrāvakas that they do not work for others' benefit is not true. The maxim of the *Dhamma-*

<sup>1</sup> *Sikṣā.*, p. 17: Tatra Bodhisttvenaivam cittam utpādayitavyam sarvasattvānām ātyayikaṃ parigṛhyaitadapi me varjayan niṣīdāmīti.

<sup>2</sup> *Sūtrā.*, p. 52.

<sup>3</sup> *Bhāgavata*, VII, ix. 44.



*pada*<sup>1</sup> “dhammadāṇṃ sabbadāṇaṃ jināti” and the admonition of the *Dīgha Nikāya* and the *Vinaya*<sup>2</sup>

“caratha, bhikkhave, cārikaṃ bahujaṇahitāya bahujaṇasukhāya lokānukampāya atthāya hitāya sukhāya devamanussānam” (go, O ye preachers, to preach the religion for the benefit and happiness of men and gods)

clearly shows that they were not as selfish as they have been painted by the Mahāyāna writers. What the Mahāyānists consider selfishness on the part of the Hinayānists is that the latter before they think themselves capable of guiding others to salvation confine themselves in their own cells and strive for their own salvation. It is after they attain true knowledge that they look upon themselves as fit to help others in the attainment of the same. But when they are undergoing the course of training *i.e.*, before reaching the arhathood they visit the householders and preach to them the elementary principles of Buddhism; and the more advanced among them often take antevāsins (disciples) to train them up in the higher principles of the religion. The lives of Sāriputta, Moggallāna, Kaccāyana, Mahākassapa, and others amply show their parārthatva, (*i.e.*, service for others) after their attainment of the arhathood. In the *Lohicca sutta* it is stated that the truth must be preached; otherwise it would be like a king enjoying the whole revenue of the State himself.<sup>3</sup> The *Sūtrālaṅkāra* does not miss this point even in its effort to prove the selfishness of the Hinayānists. It says that the Śrāvakas do not teach their followers to serve others (parārtha); they teach only how to attain for oneself nirvid (disgust for worldly matters), virāga (non-attachment) and vimukti (emancipation). It concludes by saying that the doctrine which teaches selfishness cannot become parārtha by reason of being preached to others because it engages others to svārtha, their own parinirvāṇa. Hence it is a yāna of selfishness.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Dh. P.*, 354.

<sup>2</sup> *Dīgha*, 11, p. 45; *Vinaya*, 1, pp. 20, 21.

<sup>3</sup> *Dīgha*, 1, p. 229.

<sup>4</sup> *Sūtrā.*, p. 4: na ca svārtha eva pareṣūpadiśyamanataḥ parārtho bhavitum arhati.



## ii. UPADEŚA AND iii. PRAYOGA

It follows as a matter of course that the *Upadeśa* (instruction) and *Prayoga* (exertion) should be in accordance with the *Āśaya*.<sup>1</sup> A Hīnayānist need not develop bodhicitta and try to perform the pāramitās. He need not like a bodhisattva take the vow that he would welcome the sufferings of numberless births in hell or in the Yamaloka as an animal, or as an insect, in order to lead every individual to nirupadhiśeṣanirvāṇadhātu (nirvāṇa without any corporal residue).<sup>2</sup> The regulation of life according to the rules of the *Prātimokṣa*, the performance of the duties of the eight-fold path, and the realisation of the four truths and the law of causation are sufficient for them. The comprehension of the world as void of individuality or anything belonging to an individual serves their purpose, and they need not go on to ascertain the nature of śūnyatā, the ultimate reality.

## iv. UPASTAMBHA

It is essential that in order to be a bodhisattva one must earn sufficient merits in previous lives. Unless and until these merits reach the high standard fixed by the Mahāyānists there is no possibility for a being to become a bodhisattva, or derive the real benefits from the Mahāyāna teachings. The Hīnayānists hold quite a different view. According to the *Puggala Paññatti*, the perpetrators of the five deadly sins (ānantarikas) are excluded from the possibility of attaining emancipation,<sup>3</sup> while all the rest can attain it, some requiring a little longer time than the others. Hence no *upastambha* is demanded in the code of Hīnayāna salvation: every one, other than the above men-

<sup>1</sup> *Sīkṣā.*, p. 4: those who have pure adhyāśayas practise the pāramitās; those who practise the pāramitās are established in Mahāyāna.

<sup>2</sup> *Pañca.*, leaf 81b.

<sup>3</sup> There are, however, stray instances of even the perpetrators of one of the five deadly sins attaining emancipation. Contrast *Divyā.*, p. 261: a Hīnayānist refused ordination to a patricide, who was, however, ordained by a bodhisattvajātika bhikṣu. *Sīkṣā.*, pp. 17-8: none of the five sinners can develop a citta for śrāvakabodhi or pratyekabodhi.



tioned five kinds of sinners, is eligible for the same. The Hīnayānists achieve their end by detachment from worldly activities, while the Mahāyānists do the same through such activities, of course, keeping their minds completely unattached to things of the world.

#### V. KĀLA

As the Upastambha does not count much with the Hīnayānists, and as their āśaya is simply the attainment of emancipation without the extraordinary powers of a Buddha, the time (*kāla*) required by a Hīnayānist to reach his goal is infinitely shorter than that of a bodhisattva.<sup>1</sup> The *Sūtrālaṅkāra* hints that a Hīnayānist can even attain the goal in three lives. It refers to the Hīnayāna belief that through seven births one can reach the goal, five of them taking place in the Srotāpanna stage.<sup>2</sup> The *Sūtrālaṅkāra* in calculating the rebirths leaves out of consideration the first four births preparatory to the final srotāpanna stage. This mode of calculation is also sometimes followed by the Hīnayānists themselves.<sup>3</sup>

#### PRATYKABUDDHAS DISTINGUISHED FROM ŚRĀVAKAS AND SAMYAKSAMBUDHAS

Though the Pratyekabuddhas have always been classed with the Śrāvakas as of lower aims (*hīnādhimukta*) they were distinguished from the latter as *Madhyas*.<sup>4</sup> The Mahāyānists were the *Uttamas* or *Śreṣṭhas*. The *Puṇḍarīka* shows their relative position thus: The Śrāvakas are those who follow what is taught by others (*paraghoṣāśravānugama*), exert themselves to comprehend the four truths and attain parinirvāṇa for themselves. The Pratyekabuddhas are those who desire to have self-control, quietude, and

<sup>1</sup> See *Kośa*, III, 93d-94a: Buddhattva is attained in 3 Asaṅkheyya, kalpas; see also p. 191.

<sup>2</sup> See ch. IV for details.

<sup>3</sup> *Sūtrō.*, p. 4; *Comp. of Phil.*, Intro., p. 68.

<sup>4</sup> *Sūtrā.*, pp. 4, 168; *Sad. P.*, p. 140, see *supra*, p. 76 fn.

For notes on Prādeśika, see *Kośa*, IV, p. 81 and IV, 36 a-b, p. 93; III, p. 155 fn.; *Sikṣā.*, p. 183.



knowledge without the help of a teacher (anācāryakaṃ) and seek their own parinirvāṇa after comprehending the hetu and pratyaya, i.e., the theory of causation. The Mahāyānists are those who strive to acquire the omniscience possessed by a Buddha without the help of a teacher and seek the powers of a Tathāgata in order to help all the beings of the world to attain salvation.<sup>1</sup> The *Daśabhūmika-sūtra* goes a little more into detail and distinguishes them as follows: The Śrāvakas are those who by their prajñā have acquired mastery (paribhāvyamāna) over the ten kuśala-karmapathas (ten good actions), possess a citta (mental capacity) to comprehend only an aspect of the Truth, are terrified by existence in the three dhātus (worlds) and depend on others for instructions, but in them mahākaruṇā (compassion) does not function. The Pratyekabuddhas are those who are still more purified, obtain insight into the Truth without others' help, and can comprehend thoroughly the theory of causation, but in them also mahākaruṇā (compassion) does not function. The Mahāyānists or Bodhisattvas are those who are further purified, have mastered the upāyakaūśalyas (expedients), made the mahāpraṇidhāna (the sublime resolution), given up all their inborn passions, taken the Buddhajñāna as their ālambana (support), perfected themselves in the bhūmis and pāramitās and attained all the ten balas and other powers appertaining to Buddhahood, and in them mahākaruṇā (compassion) functions in the fullest degree.<sup>2</sup> The *Madhyamakāvatāra* and other Mahāyāna treatises draw the lines of distinction between the Śrāvakas, Pratyekabuddhas, and Bodhisattvas almost in the same way as above.<sup>3</sup> The difference between the Śrāvakas and the Pratyekabuddhas on account of the latter's comprehension of the theory of causation, as pointed out by Prof. L. de la Vallée Poussin, is more scholastic than real, for it is nothing but a part of the second truth, viz., duḥkhasamudaya. The *Abhidharmakośavyākhyā* brings out the distinctions in a somewhat different way. Prof. Poussin has

<sup>1</sup> *Sad. P.*, p. 80.

<sup>2</sup> *Daśa.*, pp. 25-6.

<sup>3</sup> *M. Ava.* (Fr. transl.) in *Le Muséon*, (N.S.) VIII, pp. 252 ff. For an exhaustive bibliography, see *E.R.E.*, X, p. 154.



summarised it thus: "The Arhat, having expelled self-love from the series of saṃskāras that constitute their pseudo-individuality, develops an interest in the affairs of others, an interest born of compassion, and that destroys all pain. The ordinary man (madhya), i.e., the Pratyekabuddha, desires mere deliverance, that is to say, an end of suffering, and not happiness during the existences of the saṃsāra, because this temporal happiness is an abode of suffering. The superior man (śreṣṭha), i.e., the Bodhisattva, wishes to bring temporal happiness (ābhyudayaika) to others and also the end of suffering, which is supreme happiness (niḥśreyasa-svabhāva); or he desires for others' supreme and temporal happiness (sukham ābhyudayaika-naiḥśreyasikam), and for himself the end of suffering, i.e., Buddhahood as a means of realizing this service to others".<sup>1</sup> The *Abhidharmakośa* says in connection with the power of knowing the thoughts of others (paracittajñāna) that a Śrāvaka obtains ordinarily the power of knowing others' thoughts when they are in the first two moments of the darśanamārga only (i.e., duḥkhe dharmajñānakṣānti and duḥkhe dharmajñāna), while the Pratyekabuddha knows in addition the eighth moment, viz., samudaye anvaya-jñāna.<sup>2</sup> The Pratyekabuddha may possess one or two powers of a like nature more than a Śrāvaka, but the *summum bonum* of both is the same, and that is the reason why both are placed by the Mahāyānists in the same category, viz., Hīnayāna, the former being only distinguished as a Hīnayāna Madhya. Prof. Poussin in his article on the Pratyekabuddha<sup>3</sup> has accounted for the reason why the Pratyekabuddhas have come to figure in the Buddhist literature. He says that

<sup>1</sup> *E.R.E.*, II, p. 740 sv. Bodhisattva (summarised from *Kośa-vyākhyā* (ASB ms.), fol. 263.

<sup>2</sup> *Kośa*, vii, 6 and fn. It also says something in connection with garbhāvākraṇti about the comparative merits of a Paccekabuddha and Buddha; see *Kośa*, III, 17.

<sup>3</sup> *E.R.E.*, X, pp. 152-4. See *Divyā.*, p. 399. Piṇḍola Bharadvāja had seen Buddha. He became a Pratyekabuddha and had been living at Gandhamādana; *Divyā.*, p. 416: Jinas and Pratyekabuddhas cannot get rid of karma effects; *Divyā.*, pp. 500, 503: Pratyekabuddhas lived in a forest.



Buddha himself did not like very much the solitary life of hermit-saints, of whom there were many during his time, but he recognised the fact that those hermit-saints possessed all the qualities of an arhat, if not more. To assimilate these saints into the Buddhist community, to accord them a place in the Buddhist spiritual world, the conception of Pratyekabuddhas was introduced into the Buddhist literature. They were believed to be converted Buddhists who could not attain arhatship when the religion was living; so they continued to progress in their holiness and wisdom and as a result they discovered the Truth by their own exertion as Śākyamuni did.<sup>1</sup> On account of their lonely life, never having any teacher or spiritual guide (*kalyāṇa-mitra*), and disliking contact with the people of the world, they were unable to develop the power of preaching possessed to some extent even by the arhats.

The conception of the Paccekabuddha has come to figure more in the later Pāli literature than in the *Nikāyas*. The *Milindapañha*<sup>2</sup> compares the powers of a Paccekabuddha with those of a Buddha and an Arhat, and shows as above how a Paccekabuddha occupies a position midway between the two. The *Majjhima Nikāya* and the *Lalitavistara* refer to them more as hermits outside the Buddhist order than as occupying a stage of perfection midway between an Arhat and a Buddha.<sup>3</sup> The *Puggala-Paññatti*<sup>4</sup> points out that both the Paccekabuddhas and Sammāsambuddhas realise the truth without receiving instruction from any body but the former do not attain omniscience and mastery over phalas.<sup>5</sup> The

<sup>1</sup> *E.R.E.*, X, p. 152.

Cf. *M. Sūtra.*, xviii, 12; *M. Vr.*, p. 378;

*Sambuddhānām anutpāde śrāvakāṇām punaḥ kṣaye,*

*Jñānam pratyekabuddhānām asaṃsargāt pravartate.*

see also *Madhyamakāvatāra* in *Le Muséon*, (N.S.) VIII, p. 253.

<sup>2</sup> *Mil.*, p. 106.

<sup>3</sup> *Majjhima*, III, p. 86; *Lal. Vis.* (R. L. Mitra), p. 20; see also *Saṃyutta*, I, p. 92; *Udāna*, 50.

<sup>4</sup> *Pug. P.*, pp. 14, 73.

<sup>5</sup> Contrast *Pug. P.*, p. 70 where Sāriputta, Moggallāna and other Arhats are also said to have realised the truth not heard of before and put an end to their sufferings by realising the dhamma.



Hinayānists do not dispute the fact that Buddha possessed powers much greater than those of an Arhat or a Pratyekabuddha,<sup>1</sup> but as according to them it is only in many kalpas<sup>2</sup> that a being attains to Buddhahood, the consideration of Buddha's powers or the possibility of attainment of same does not interest them much. The *Milindapañha*, however, has described in terms identical with those of the Mahāyāna scriptures the extraordinary powers possessed by a Buddha, but it has in view Buddha Śākyamuni and the few other Buddhas conceived by the Hinayānists, and not the countless Buddhas of the Mahāyānists.

#### GOTRABHEDA, THE MAIN REASON FOR PERSONS HAVING DIFFERENT ASPIRATIONS

The *Sūtrālaṅkāra*<sup>3</sup> answers the query why among the disciples of Buddha there are persons with high, medium, or low aspirations. This question reduces itself into a discussion of the subject of *gotrabheda*, difference in classes, and the examination of the statement found in the *Akṣarāśi-sūtra*<sup>4</sup> that on account of the various ingredients (dhātu) constituting beings they have endless distinctions of dhātus (qualities). It divides them into three classes, viz., *Niyata-gotras*, *Aniyata-gotras*, and *Agotras*. Under the first heading fall all those who by virtue of their previous merits or innate dispositions are destined to become either Śrāvakayānābhisamayagotra, Pratyekabuddhayānābhisamayagotra or Tathāgatayānābhisamayagotra. Under the second heading come all those who are still on the border-line and may become either Hinayānists or Mahāyānists. Under the third heading fall all other beings, who are again grouped into two sub-classes namely, (i) those who will not be able to

<sup>1</sup> See, e.g., *Samyutta*, III, pp. 65-6; *Niddesa*, I, pp. 177-180; *Paṭi. S.*, II, p. 31.

<sup>2</sup> *Dīgha*, II, p. 139; but see also *Dīgha*, II, p. 2: 91 kalpas ago Vipassi was Buddha, 31 kalpas ago Sikhi was Buddha, in the same kalpa Vessabhu was Buddha. In this bhadrakalpa there have been four Buddhas, Kakusandha, Konāgamana, Kassapa, and Śākyamuni.

<sup>3</sup> *Sūtrā.*, ch. III; cf. *Bodhic.*, p. 14; *Mvyut.*, 81.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10 fn.; see also *ante*.



attain parinirvāṇa at all (atyantam), and (ii) those who for the time being (tatkāla) will not attain parinirvāṇa. Among the Niyatagotrasthas, it is the dhātus (qualities) which settle one's adhimukti (aspiration), while adhimukti determines the pratipatti (attainments) and it is according to one's bīja (seed) that the fruitions become hīna (low), madhya (medium), or viśiṣṭa (excellent). The Śrāvakas are inferior to the Bodhisattvas because the former possess neither powerful merits nor merits of all kinds (or degrees) as they lack the five balas (powers), and the six vaiśāradyas (self-confidence born of the highest knowledge, etc.).<sup>1</sup> Moreover, their merits are not everlasting, because they seek only anupādiśeṣa-nirvāṇa (i.e., Nirvāṇa without any corporal residue); neither are the merits productive of great results, as the Śrāvakas do not dedicate themselves wholly to the service of others (aparārthatvāt).

The *Laṅkāvatāra*<sup>2</sup> also incidentally deals with the gotras, saying that there are five *abhisamaya-gotras* (i.e., classification of persons with reference to the attainment of enlightenment), viz., Śrāvakayānābhisamayagotra, Pratyekabuddhāyā°; Tathāgatayā°, <sup>3</sup> Aniyatagotra, and Agotra. The Śrāvakayānābhisamayagotras are those who are enraptured by the teaching of the generic properties of the various constituents of the body (skandhadhātuvāyatanasvasāmānyalakṣaṇa) and who acquire an insight into the properties of things associated with the causal law (pratītyasamutpādavīnirbhāgalakṣaṇa-paricaye). Being in the fifth or sixth bhūmi (stage of progress), they are free from all forthcoming afflictions, but not vāsanā-kleśa (sufferings due to impressions<sup>4</sup>). They reach a stage from which there is no fall, and by virtue of same they proclaim that they have led the holy life of a saint, realised the egolessness of individuals, attained Nirvāṇa, and

<sup>1</sup> See Prof. Lévi's notes on these words in his translation of the *Sūtrā.*, pp. 26, 27 fn.

<sup>2</sup> *Laṅkā.*, pp. 63-65.

<sup>3</sup> These three are called Niyata-gotras. See above.

<sup>4</sup> Vāsanā= "the impression unconsciously left on the mind by past good or bad actions, which therefore produce pleasure or pain." Apte's *Dict.*



are no longer subject to rebirths. The author of the *Laṅkāvatāra* makes a digression here and says that some of these Śrāvakas think that they have attained Nirvāṇa by realising the egolessness of individuals, and some think that they have attained it by comprehending the causal relation of things, but in fact, there is no real Nirvāṇa without the realisation of the essencelessness of all things (dharmanairātmya). They consider to be an exit (niryāṇa) that which is not really so and hence they hold only one of the many wrong views. The Pratyekabuddhayānābhisamayagotras are those who are enraptured by the hearing of discourses relating to the enlightenment of particular individuals, do not like others' company, and are impressed much by miracles. The Tathāgatayānābhisamayagotras, according to the *Laṅkāvatāra*, are of three kinds, (i) those who realise the essencelessness of all the so-called existent things, (ii) those who hold that the realisation of the truth can happen only within one's own self, and (iii) those who realise the greatness of all Buddha-kṣetras.

The Aniyatagotras are those who take to one of the three gotras mentioned above when they are explained to them. They are really in a preparatory stage. When the Ālaya-vijñāna of theirs is purged of all kleśas and vāsanās, they become either Śrāvakas or Bodhisattvas after enjoying the bliss of meditation as the result of the realisation of the essencelessness of things. The Hīnayānist recognize these classifications but in quite a different sense. The *Puggala Paññatti* as well as the *Kośa* mentions Niyata- and Aniyata-puggalas, but according to them the Niyatas are either those who on account of the commission of five deadly sins are destined to have wrong views or are those who are ariya-puggalas, i.e., are in one of the eight stages of sanctification and are destined to attain Nirvāṇa while all the rest are Aniyatas, i.e., their careers are yet unsettled.<sup>1</sup> The term Gotrabhū occupies an important place in the Hīnayāna scheme of salvation. It signifies a person who for the first time steps into the path of Nirvāṇa after separating himself

<sup>1</sup> *Pug. Pañ.*, p. 13; *Kośa*, III, 44c, pp. 137-8.



from the average mass (*puthujjana*).<sup>1</sup> It is after a course of spiritual training that a person becomes a *gotrabhū* who after a "single moment of path-consciousness" discerns the first of the four truths, removes his doubts and errors, obtains an intuition into *Nirvāṇa*, and commences the performance of the duties of the eightfold path. He becomes an *ariya* and is fit for passing to the highest state of *ariya-puggalas*. It is in this sense that the *Śatasāhasrikā*<sup>2</sup> also uses the term *gotrabhūraṣṭamaka* while mentioning the various stages, in which the beings, destined to attain perfection, remain.

#### HĪNAYĀNISM CRITICIZED BY THE MAHĀYĀNISTS

It is now evident that the Mahāyānists hold the same view of the Hīnayāna as the Hīnayānists did of the religious and philosophical beliefs of the preceding Brahmvādins or Śāśvatavādins. In the *Brahmajāla sutta* it is stated that some people became Brahmvādins or Śāśvatavādins not on account of any particular views but on account of their incapacity to think of anything higher than the *Brahmaloka* or seeing beyond a few thousands of births. It was Buddha who crossed this limit, and found out their shortcomings.<sup>3</sup> It is apparent that there has been a continuous development of thought, and the neo-thinkers, the Mahāyānists, read all the statements attributed to Buddha in a new light. Once a higher plane of thought is reached, every statement naturally comes to be interpreted from that higher plane. The Mahāyānists pity the Hīnayānists for their misconceptions in the same way as the latter have pitied the Brahmvādins or Śāśvatavādins. According to the Hīnayānists, *Nirvāṇa* marked a state superior to that of *Brahma*<sup>4</sup> while according to the Mahāyānists, *Nirvāṇa* is only a temporary test, and the real *Nirvāṇa* is much higher than the state conceived by the Hīnayānists. So the Hīnayānists

<sup>1</sup> *Comp. of Phil.*, pp. 68, 129 fn.; *Majjhima*, III, p. 256; *Anguttara*, IV, p. 373, V, p. 23; *Vis. M.*, p. 138.

<sup>2</sup> *Sata.*, p. 1263.

<sup>3</sup> *Dīgha*, I, pp. 12 ff.; II, p. 251.

<sup>4</sup> See *Dīgha*, I, p. 223.



have come now to be looked upon with commiseration by the Mahāyānists for their poor conceptions and ideals. From the latter's standpoint they are like so many young boys playing with toys, not possessing the capacity to understand the reality. The *Kāśyapa Parivarta*<sup>1</sup> says that just as the sons of the chief queen by a poor man are not recognised as princes, while the sons of the king whether by the chief queen or a maid are recognised as such, so the Hīnayānists may be an outcome of the same dharmadhātu<sup>2</sup> as the Mahāyānists, but cannot therefore be recognised as the sons of Buddha, just as the chief queen's sons by a poor man are not recognised as princes. The *Prajñāpāramitās* harp on the theme that the prajñā (knowledge) of one who has perfected himself in the prajñāpāramitā cannot bear comparison with the prajñā of the best Śrāvakas. The *Lalitavistara*,<sup>3</sup> the *Kāśyapa Parivarta*,<sup>4</sup> and other works are emphatic in their declaration that the bodhisattva must develop asprhā (non-desire) for Hīnayāna. The *Bodhicaryāvatāra*<sup>5</sup> thinks that all the merits of Śrāvakas and Pratyekabuddhas cannot equal the merits of a bodhisattva who has developed bodhicitta, while the *Śikṣāsamuccaya*<sup>6</sup> considers it a mūlāpatti (serious offence) for a bodhisattva either to associate with a Śrāvaka, for this would make him dull of intellect, or to preach Mahāyāna to one whose kuśalamūlas are not enough to make him take to Mahāyāna teaching,<sup>7</sup> and it would be a deadly sin for the bodhisattva to develop a citta for Śrāvaka- or Pratyekabuddha-bhūmi.<sup>8</sup> The *Gaṇḍavyūha*<sup>9</sup> gives a long list of their imperfections as compared with a bodhisattva, and shows the former's

<sup>1</sup> *Kāś. P.*, p. 116 (80).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Sūtrā.*, p. 68 : dharmadhāturabhinnatvāt, see *supra*.

<sup>3</sup> *Lal. Vis.*, p. 34.

<sup>4</sup> *Kāś. P.*, pp. 50, 115.

<sup>5</sup> *Bodhic.*, pp. 18, 48.

<sup>6</sup> *Śikṣā.*, pp. 54, 59.

<sup>7</sup> *Bodhic.*, pp. 146, 147. It cites the *Ratnakūṭasūtras*, *Sarvadharmavaipulyasaṅgrahasūtra*, and *Ākāśagarbhasūtra* in support of the contention that the higher teaching (Mahāyāna) should not be imparted to a man of lower capabilities, and the lower teaching (Hīnayāna) to a man of higher capabilities.

<sup>8</sup> *Śikṣā.*, p. 17, 50.

<sup>9</sup> *Gaṇḍavyūha* (A.S.B. ms.), leaf. 9b



inability to visualize actions (vikurvita) of Buddha at Jetavana. The reasons adduced are that the knowledge of Buddha is beyond the reach of Śrāvakas, their jñānacakṣu (eye of knowledge) is not so powerful as to see the actions of Buddha, and so forth. The *Prajñāpāramitās*<sup>1</sup> and the *Śikṣāsamuccaya*<sup>2</sup> regard the Śrāvakas as pāpamitras (evil friends) as opposed to kalyāṇamitras (true friends) of the bodhisattvas, for the former persuade the latter to leave the Mahāyāna path of salvation as very arduous, impracticable, requiring too long a time, and to take to their path of salvation as practical, better, and requiring a much shorter period. The *Puṇḍarīka*<sup>3</sup> calls the Hīnayānists abhimāṇikas (conceited) because they do not believe its statements.

Though there is an attempt to decry Hīnayānism in almost all the Mahāyāna works, they cannot afford to deny the Hīnayānists credit for some advance in the path of sanctification, specially for moral progress. According to the *Puṇḍarīka*<sup>4</sup> there are in each Buddha-kṣetra innumerable Śrāvakas, who are all endowed with energy (vīrya) and are like jewels without any flaw in the observance of the śīlas. The disparagement of the dharma of the Śrāvakas and Pratyekabuddhas is considered one of the mūlāpattis for a bodhisattva<sup>5</sup>. The *Śikṣāsamuccaya*<sup>6</sup> and the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*<sup>7</sup> enjoin upon bodhisattvas that they should show equal respect to both Śrāvakayāna and Mahāyāna. The *Bodhisattvabhūmi*<sup>8</sup> considers it an offence if a bodhisattva thinks that he should not listen to, learn, or practise the dharmas which are connected with Śrāvakayāna. It is not an unusual occurrence for bodhisattvas to approach Śrāvakas<sup>9</sup> to hear religious

<sup>1</sup> *Sata.*, pp. 1185f.; *Kaś. P.*, p. 50.

<sup>2</sup> *Śikṣā.*, p. 54.

<sup>3</sup> *Sad. P.*, p. 43.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 24; see also pp. 282, 285, 302.

<sup>5</sup> *Śikṣā.*, pp. 54, 59; *Bodhic.*, pp. 146, 147.

<sup>6</sup> *Śikṣā.*, p. 92; *Bodhic.*, p. 146. See also Prof. La Vallée Poussin's Notes sur le grand véhicule in the *Revue de l'histoire des religions*, 1909.

<sup>7</sup> *Bodhic.*, p. 146.

<sup>8</sup> See *Revue de l'histoire des religions*, 1909, p. 3.

<sup>9</sup> In the *Gaṇḍavyūha* it is stated that Sudhanu approached many Śrāvakas for learning the duties of a bodhisattva.



discourses, and it is striking that Subhūti undertakes the rôle of giving an exposition of the Śūnyatā philosophy in the *Prajñāparamitās*. Thus it is evident that in the early stages of Mahāyāna, Śrāvakas were treated with reverence; this is also apparent from the formula of salutation which appears at the commencement of the early Mahāyāna works, in which among Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, Śrāvakas are also mentioned. In some of the later Mahāyāna treatises, the formula has been shortened, e.g., the formula of the *Śatasāhasrikā*, the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka*, and the *Lalitavistara*, which runs as “*Namaḥ sarvatathāgatapratyekabuddhāryaśrāvakebhyo, etc.*”, is shortened in the *Śikṣāsamuccaya*, *Sūtrālaṅkāra*, and the *Mahāvīyūtpatti* into “*Namaḥ sarvabuddhabodhisattvebhyaḥ*”. It is clearly seen in the Mahāyāna works that the progress of Śrāvakas in the path of perfection is recognised by them: their moral life is also admired. It was their ideal and their less metaphysical conception of things that failed to win the approval of the Mahāyānists, and consequently their codes of ethics and philosophical views were regarded by the latter as inadequate and superficial.



## CHAPTER III

### The Doctrines of Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna Compared :

#### (a). Preliminary

#### HĪNAYĀNA DOCTRINES EVALUATED IN THE EARLY MAHĀYĀNA SCRIPTURES

In the course of our examination of the attitude of the Mahāyānists towards the Hīnayānists we have found that the former have utilized the doctrines of the latter but have shown that these in their opinion are only an imperfect exposition of the Truth which Buddha had in his mind. The *Prajñāpāramitās* mention the doctrines, which loom large in the eyes of the Hīnayānists, e.g., the Caturārya-satyas, the Pratītya-samutpāda, the Bodhipakṣika-dharmas, the four phalas, the minute divisions and sub-divisions of dhātus, citta and caittas, in order to show from the standpoint of śūnyatā, that the doctrines, which engaged the attention of the Hīnayānists so seriously and for the analysis of which they had taken so much pains, were of little consequence, as the view taken by them of the Truth was only a partial one (sāṃvṛta) and would not carry them to the goal, or help them in realising the ultimate (paramārtha) truth. The *Saddharma-Puṇḍarīka*, which regarded Hīnayāna as a stepping stone to Mahāyāna, did not reject the Hīnayāna doctrines as altogether useless. It showed that the Hīnayāna doctrines had a value of their own. Though they might not have helped the realisation of the ultimate truth, yet they could carry their followers to a stage from which it would not be difficult for them to reach the state of perfection the Mahāyānists had in view. It also claimed that the Hīnayāna doctrines were preached by Buddha as much as the Mahāyāna doctrines but that the former were only an upāya (expedient) adopted by him to meet the weak intelligence of his early disciples. The *Puṇḍarīka*<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Sad. P.*, pp. 89-92.



cites in this connection a remark attributed to Buddha: "I am the great ascetic (ṛṣi) and father of all beings who are born in the three dhātus (i.e., Kāma, Rūpa and Arūpa) and cling to desires (kāma). The three dhātus are dreadful, full of hundreds of sufferings; there are burning in them incessantly the fires of birth, old age, and disease. I have come out of these three dhātus and am living alone peacefully in open air, but as these fires are burning my ignorant sons, they are affecting me as well. I know the dangers (ādīnava) and I know the way out, but these ignorant persons will not hear my excellent admonitions. So I have to take recourse to the expedient of showing them only the path of escaping from the miseries of the three dhātus. To those of them, who have taken refuge in me and have acquired the six abhiññās (higher knowledge) and the three vidyās,<sup>1</sup> or to those, who have become Pratyekabuddhas or never-to-turn-back (avaivartika) Bodhisattvas, I now say that they should take to the Buddhayāna and become Jinas. I tell them of the excellent knowledge of the Buddhas, their powers (bala), trances (dhyāna), higher trances (vimokṣa) and contemplations (samādhi). To the Śrāvakas who have attained what they call Nirvāṇa, I say that they are all my sons and I am their father. I have brought them out of their sufferings (duḥkha) which were consuming them for innumerable kalpas. I call this state of theirs also Nirvṛti but they have not yet attained the Nirvṛti in its fullness. They have freed themselves from the sufferings of transmigration; now they should seek for the yāna leading to Buddhahood."

The Bodhisattvas are asked by the Teacher to observe the rules of conduct leading to Buddhahood while those who have low desires are asked by him to realise the four ārya-satyas. Those who are not conscious of the sufferings (duḥkha) or their causes are apprised of the fact that tṛṣṇā

<sup>1</sup> The three Vidyās, in the enumeration, refer to three of the six Abhiññās, viz., Pubbenivāsānussati-ñāṇaṃ, Sattānaṃ cutūpapāte ñāṇaṃ, and Āsavānaṃ khaye ñāṇaṃ. See *Dīgha*, III, p. 220. The remaining three Abhiññās are Dibbasota, Dibbacakkhu and Paracitta-vijāṇanam.



(desire) is the cause of all sufferings (duḥkha-samudaya). To get rid of tṛṣṇā, the third and fourth truths, nirodha-satya and mārga are explained to them. But in fact those who have reached the end of the mārga are not completely liberated (anirvṛta), and so they cannot be considered to have attained emancipation (mokṣa), which one cannot reach unless and until he possesses agra-bodhi.

To show more clearly the relation between the Mahāyāna and the Hīnayāna doctrines, the *Puṇḍarīka* introduces one of the frequently used similes of the Buddhist literature,<sup>1</sup> viz., that of the man born blind. A man born blind does not believe in the existence of the sun and the moon, or of such other objects, even if he is told of their existence. A physician, who can cure all kinds of diseases, finds out that the man's blindness is due to his past evil deeds. He knows that all diseases are due to the abnormal state of any of the three humours, viz., wind (vāta), bile (pitta), phlegm (śleṣman) or their complicated derangements (sāmnipātika). He thinks of the remedy and finds that the special medicines required for the malady are available only in the Himalayas. Out of compassion for the blind man he procures the medicines and by their application cures him of his blindness. The man now realises his foolishness for not having believed in the existence of the sun, moon, and stars, and is possessed by the idea that he can see all that is to be seen and all that others can see. He is told by some ṛṣis who are possessed of the five kinds of superior knowledge (abhiññā), that his pride is baseless, because he has no praññā and is therefore not a wise man (paṇḍita), for he is not able to see what is behind the wall, or know the minds of others, or hear what is being said at a distance of five yojanas, and so forth. On enquiring how he is to attain them, he is advised to live in a forest or a cave, meditate on the dharma and get rid of passions (kleśas). He accordingly retires from the world, lives in a forest and attains those five abhiññās. In the light of his new acquirements, he realises how small in comparison were his previous powers.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Mil.*, pp. 134, 135.



The simile is then explained as follows: the blind men represent the beings who are in one of the six forms of existence (*ṣaḍgatyupapanna*) and ignorant of the true doctrines. They have been blinded by *avidyā* (ignorance of the Truth), from which have followed the *saṃskāras* (impressions), then *nāmarūpa* (name and form) and ultimately the *duḥkhaskandha* (sufferings). The Tathāgata who has escaped from the three *dhātus* reappears there out of fatherly love (*maitrī*) and compassion (*karuṇā*). He sees the beings passing through the cycles of existence unaware of the means of escape. Through his extraordinary power of perception he ascertains that there are beings, of whom some have little hatred but strong attachment (*mandadveṣa tīvra-rāga*), some little attachment but strong hatred (*mandarāga tīvradveṣa*), while others are wise (*pañḍita*) or unwise (*alpaprajña*), pure (*paripākaśuddha*), or have wrong views (*mithyādr̥ṣṭi*). He accordingly imparts his teaching in various ways suited to the mentality of each. The ṛṣis possessed of the five *abhiññās* are the Bodhisattvas who have developed Bodhicitta and who after attaining *anutpattikadharmakṣānti* (belief in the non-origination of things)<sup>1</sup> will become Buddhas. The physician is the Tathāgata. The humours wind (*vāta*), bile (*pitta*), and phlegm (*śleṣman*) are attachment (*rāga*), hatred (*dveṣa*), and delusion (*moha*), and the four medicines are the meditations of *Śūnyatā* (essencelessness), *Animittatā* (non-contamination by objects of perception), *Apraṇihitatā* (freedom from desire for perceived objects), and the attainment of *nirvāṇadvāra*. As by the application of medicines the diseases disappear, so by the meditations of *Śūnyatā*, *Animitta*, and *Apraṇihita*, the *Avidyā* and the sufferings gradually disappear and the mind no longer clings to any idea of good or evil actions.

The Śrāvakas and Pratyekabuddhas are compared to the blind men after the recovery of their eyesight. They have cut asunder the ties of *saṃsāra* (world), freed themselves from *kleśas* (passions, errors, etc.) and passed out of the three *dhātus*. They think that by reaching Nirvāṇa they

<sup>1</sup> See, for explanation, *Sīkṣā.*, p. 212; *Kośa*, I, 6, 39; II, 53, 250 266; *Dh. S.*, p. 63.



have attained all there is to be attained. The Tathāgata then teaches them that it is by the realisation of the sameness (samatā) of all dharmas that they can truly attain Nirvāṇa. They are made to develop Bodhicitta and realise that they are neither in Saṃsāra nor in Nirvāṇa. They now comprehend that all the three dhātus of each of the ten directions are essenceless (śūnya) like images in dreams. They see all dharmas as having neither origin (anutpannā) nor destruction (aniruddhā), they are neither unfettered (abaddhā) nor fettered (amuktā), neither dark (anandhakārā) nor luminous (atamā). They, who thus realise the dharma which pervades all the three dhātus, can see what is not ordinarily visible.<sup>1</sup>

#### FUNDAMENTAL POINTS OF DIFFERENCE

The *Saddharma-Puṇḍarīka*, in this manner, clearly brings out the fundamental points of difference between the doctrines of Hinayāna and Mahāyāna. It shows:—

(1) That Buddha resides aloof from the three dhātus, though he appears in them out of compassion for the innumerable beings who suffer on account of their ignorance of the Truth;

(2) That the Nirvāṇa of Śrāvakas is only a place of rest where there is no misery, but it is not the real and final rest, and that Śrāvakas after attaining their Nirvāṇa have still to undergo a course of training to enable them to reach the only real and final state, Buddhahood; and

(3) That the mental capacities of beings vary; so for a certain class of beings (i.e., Śrāvakas), the four Truths and the Law of Causation were preached in order to lead them out of the three dhātus, Kāma, Rūpa and Arūpa.

These three points require separate treatment, for the first refers to the Trikāya conception of the Mahāyānists, the second to the conception of Nirvāṇa as held by Śrāvakas and Bodhisattvas, and the third to the conventional and transcendental truths in Hinayāna and Mahāyāna.

<sup>1</sup> *Sad. P.*, pp. 133–7.



### (b). The Doctrine of Kāya

The first point of difference between the Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna schools noticed by the *Saddharma-Puṇḍarīka*, viz., that Buddha makes a show of his existence in the three dhātus leads us to an examination of the question of the Kāyas of Buddha as conceived by the Hīnayānists and the Mahāyānists. Of the Hīnayāna schools, the Sthaviravādins had very little to do with the kāya conceptions, as Buddha was to them an actual man living in this world like any other human being and subject to all the frailties of a mortal body. Metaphorically they sometimes spoke of Buddha as identical with Dhamma without any metaphysical implication but these remarks gave opportunity to the Sarvāstivādins and the Mahāyānists to put forth their theories of Dharmakāya.

The Sarvāstivādins commenced speculating on the kāya of Buddha, but it was the school of the Mahāsāṅghikas that took up the question of kāya in right earnest and paved the way for the speculations of the Mahāyānists.

The early Mahāyānists, whose doctrines are mostly to be found in the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā*, along with the school of Nāgārjuna conceived of two kāyas: (i) Rūpa- (or Nirmāṇa-) kāya, which included bodies, gross and subtle, meant for beings in general, and (ii) Dharmakāya, which was used in two senses, one being the body of Dharma, (i.e., collection of practices) which makes a being a Buddha, and the other the metaphysical principle underlying the universe—the Reality (Tathatā).

The Yogācāra school distinguished the gross rūpakāya from the subtle rūpakāya, calling the former Rūpa- or Nirmāṇa-kāya and the latter Sambhogakāya. The *Laṅkāvatāra*, representing the earliest stage of the Yogācāra conception, calls the Sambhoga-kāya Niṣyanda-buddha or Dharmatā-niṣyanda-buddha (the Buddha produced by the Dharmas). The *Sūtrālaṅkāra*<sup>1</sup> uses the term Sambhogakāya for Niṣyanda-

<sup>1</sup> *Sūtrā.*, pp. 45, 188.



buddha and Svābhāvikakāya for Dharmakāya. In the *Abhisamayālaṅkārikā* and the recast version of the *Pañcaviṃśati-sāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā*, Sambhogakāya denotes the subtle body which the Buddhas adopted for preaching their doctrines to Bodhisattvas, and Dharmakāya the body purified by the practice of the bodhipakṣika and other dharma which constitute a Buddha. For the metaphysical Dharmakāya they use the term Svabhāva- or Svābhāvika-kāya. The *Vijñaptimātratāsiddhi* retains the conception of the *Kārikā* but adopts a new term, Svasambhogakāya, to denote the Dharmakāya of the *Kārikā* and distinguishes the Sambhogakāya by calling it Parasambhoga-kāya.

#### REALISTIC CONCEPTION OF BUDDHA IN THE NIKĀYAS

In a land where the tendency to deify saints is so strong, it is greatly to the credit of the early Hīnayānists that they were able to retain the human conception of Buddha even a century or two after his actual existence, when the scriptures may be regarded as having been put into a definite shape. They gave expression to their conception of Buddha in the following words:

Bhagavā arahaṃ sammāsambuddho vijjācaraṇasampanno sugato lokavidū anuttaro purisadammasārathi satthā devamanussānaṃ buddho bhagavā. So imaṃ lokam sadevakam samarakam sabrahmakam sassamaṇabrāhmaṇiṃ pajam sadevamanussam sayam abhiññā sacchikatvā pavedeti. So dhammam deseti ādikalyāṇam, etc.

(The Blessed One is an arhat, a fully awakened one, endowed with knowledge and good conduct, happy, a knower of the world, unsurpassed, a leader able to control men, a teacher of men and gods, the awakened, the blessed. He knows thoroughly the worlds of gods, māras, recluses, brahmins and men, and having known them he makes his knowledge known to others. He preaches the dhamma (doctrines), which is excellent in the beginning, middle and end, etc.).<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This passage occurs in many places of the *Nikāyas*, see, e.g., *Dīgha*, I, pp. 87-88; cf. *Lal. Vis.*, p. 3; *Sad. P.*, pp. 144, 376.



A description like this does not suggest that Buddha was originally more than a man, a mortal. In the cosmology of the Buddhists, the gods of the various heavens, the highest of which is Brahmaloṇa,<sup>1</sup> are only beings of superior merit and power, but they are inferior, in the matter of spiritual attainments, to the saints or arhats. So in this description, the Hīnayānists do not attribute any transcendental or theistic element to Buddha. All they say is that Śākyamuni, by pure and simple spiritual culture in this life and as a result of the accumulated merits of his previous lives, reached the highest stage of perfection and attained not only knowledge and power superior to any man or god but also the highest knowledge and power attainable. In the *Majjhima Nikāya*, Ānanda explains why Buddha should be considered superior to the Arhats as well, although both arrived at the same goal. He says that there is not a single bhikkhu who can be regarded as endowed with all the qualities in all their forms as possessed by Buddha. Moreover, a Buddha is the originator of the path not existing before, a knower and promulgator of the mārga, which is only followed by the sāvakas.<sup>2</sup>

#### NIKĀYA PASSAGES ADMITTING A NON-REALISTIC CONCEPTION

In the face of such descriptions of Buddha, it would have been difficult for the later Hīnayāna schools to sublimate the human elements in him, had it not been for certain expressions in some of the earlier works of the Piṭaka, which lent themselves to other interpretations. Some of these expressions are:—

(1) Yo vo Ānanda mayā dhammo ca vinayo ca desito paññatto so vo mam' accayena satthā.

(Buddha said to Ānanda just before his parinibbāna 'the dhamma and vinaya that have been preached by me will be your teacher after my death.')

<sup>1</sup> In the Mahāyānic works also, as for instance in the *Daśa.*, it is stated that a Bodhisattva can become a Mahābrahman in the ninth bhūmi if he so wishes.

<sup>2</sup> *Majjhima*, III, p. 8.

<sup>3</sup> *Dīgha*, II, p. 154; *Mil.*, p. 99.



The dhamma and vinaya clearly refer to the collection of doctrines and disciplinary rules delivered by Buddha. This is also evident from the conversation of Ānanda with Gopaka-Moggallāna, where the former explains why the monks after Buddha's death should not be regarded as without refuge (appaṭisaraṇa). He says that they have now a refuge in Dhamma (dhammapaṭisaraṇa), which, he points out, are the doctrines and disciplinary rules.<sup>1</sup>

(2) Bhagavato' mhi putto oraso mukhato jāto dhammajo dhammanimmito dhammadāyādo iti.<sup>2</sup> Taṃ kissa hetu? Tathāgatassa h' etam adhivacanam. Dhammakāyo iti pi Brahmakāyo iti pi. Dhammabhūto<sup>3</sup> iti pi ti.

Just as a brāhmaṇa would say that he is born of Brahmā, through his mouth—Brahmuno putto oraso mukhato jāto brahmajo brahmanimmito brahmadāyādo—so a Sākya-puttiya-samaṇa may say that he is born of Bhagavā, through his mouth, born of his doctrine, made of his doctrine, etc. Though in this passage Dhamma is equated with Brahmā, the context shows that there is no metaphysical sense in it; it is only to draw a parallel between a brāhmaṇa and a Sākya-puttiya-samaṇa that Dhammakāya is equated with Brahmakāya.

(3) Vakkali on his death-bed became very eager to see Buddha in person; so Bhagavā came to him and said,

“Alaṃ Vakkali kiṃ te pūtikāyena diṭṭhena. Yo kho Vakkali dhammaṃ passati so maṃ passati. Yo maṃ passati so dhammaṃ passati.”

Just after saying this, Buddha referred to his dhamma of impermanence (anicca). There are in the Nikāyas many

<sup>1</sup> *Majjhima, Gopaka-Moggallāna Sutta* (No. 108). Cf. *Saddhamma Saṅgaha* (JPTS., 1890), ch. x, p. 65: Buddha says “84,000 dhammakkhandaḥ have been preached by me in 45 years. I alone only pass away while there are 84,000 dhammakkhandaḥ which like 84,000 Buddhas (buddha-sadisa) will admonish you.”

<sup>2</sup> *Samyutta*, II, p. 221; *Majjhima*, III, p. 29 has the identical passage with the addition “no āmisadāyādo” after “dhammadāyādo.” For the interpretation of “dhammadāyādo” see *Majjhima*, I, pp. 12f.

<sup>3</sup> *Majjhima*, II, p. 84; *Dīgha*, III, p. 84; *Majjhima*, III, pp. 195, 224 has “Bhagavā jānam jānāti passam passati cakkhubhūto āṇa-bhūto dhammabhūto.”



passages of this import, which may well be taken as precursors of the later Mahāyānic conceptions and probably formed the basis of their speculations. But the passages when read as they stand do not appear to bear any metaphysical sense. In this passage Buddha refers to his body as *pūtī-kāya* (body of impure matter), and to lay stress on his doctrines he says that his dhamma should be looked upon with the same awe and reverence by his disciples as they regard his person.<sup>1</sup>

(4) The passage in the *Aṅguttara Nikāya*,<sup>2</sup> where Buddha says that he is neither a god, nor a gandhabba, nor a man, has been taken by Prof. Masson-Oursel<sup>3</sup> as showing trace of the Mahāyānic kāya conceptions. It is not impossible to read some metaphysical ideas into the passage, though probably the compiler of the Suttas did not mean to convey them. Doṇa brāhmaṇa, noticing the sign of the wheel in the feet of Buddha, enquired of him whether he was a deva, a gandhabba, a yakkha or a mortal. Buddha replied that he was none of these beings as he had got rid of the āsavas (impurities) by the continuance of which one remains a deva, gandhabba, yakkha or mortal. Just as a lotus is born in water, grows in it but remains above and is apart from it, so also Buddha was born in the world, grew up in it but overcame it (*abhibhuyya*) and lived unaffected by the same. Therefore, he asked the brāhmaṇa not to regard him as anything but Buddha.

<sup>1</sup> *Samyutta*, III, p. 120; *Majjhima*, I, pp. 190, 191: Yo paṭicca-samuppādaṃ passati so dhammaṃ passati yo dhammaṃ passati so paṭicca-samuppādaṃ passati. For other references, see Prof. Vallée Poussin's article "Notes sur les Corps du Buddha" in *Le Muséon*, 1913, pp. 259-290. Compare the remarks in the later Pāli works,—

*Saddhamma Saṅgaha* (JPTS., 1890), p. 61:

Yo me passati saddhammaṃ so maṃ passati Vakkali,

Apassamāno saddhammaṃ maṃ passe pi na passati.

*Milinda*, p. 71: yo dhammaṃ passati so bhagavantam passati, dhammo hi mahārāja bhagavatā desito ti.

*Ibid.*, p. 73: Dhammakāyena pana kho mahārāja sakkā bhagavā nidassetum, dhammo hi mahārāja bhagavatā desito ti.

<sup>2</sup> *Aṅguttara*, II, p. 38.

<sup>3</sup> Prof. Masson-Oursel in his article "*Les trois Corps du Bouddha*", *J.A.*, 1913, pp. 581ff.



There are other passages referring to the miraculous powers of Buddha, viz., his ability to live a kalpa or to assume different forms and perform such other miracles, but it should be noted that these powers were attributed not to Buddha alone but also to his disciples in general, who had been able to attain the higher stages of sanctification.<sup>1</sup>

#### KĀYA-CONCEPTION OF THE THERAVĀDINS REMAINED UNCHANGED

Even if it be assumed that the Mahāyānic ideas are latent in the above-mentioned expressions though not adequately expressed, the discussion in the *Kathāvatthu*<sup>2</sup> to establish the historical existence of Buddha as against those who denied it, and the manner in which references were made to the events of Buddha's life as depicted in the Nikāyas leaves no vestige of doubt about the opinion of the Theravādins regarding the kāya of Buddha.

Though the terms rūpakāya and dharmakāya found their way into the later Pāli works<sup>3</sup> from Mahāyāna or semi-Mahāyāna works, they did not bring with them any non-realistic sense. Buddhaghosa even as late as the fifth century A.C. refers thus to the kāyas:

Yo pi so Bhagavā asīti anuvyañjanapaṭimaṇḍita-dvattim-samahāpurisalakkhaṇa-vicitra-rūpakāyo sabbākāraparisuddha-silakkhandhādi-guṇaratanasamiddha-dhammakāyo yasamahatta-puññamahatta.....appaṭipuggalo araham sammāsam-buddho.

(That Bhagavā, who is possessed of a beautiful rūpakāya, adorned with eighty minor signs and thirty-two major signs of a great man, and possessed of a dhammakāya purified in

<sup>1</sup> See *Kośa*, II, 10 (also for references in the *Nikāyas*).

<sup>2</sup> *Kvu.*, xvii, 1: The Vetulyakas held on the basis of the passage cited above (fn. 4) that "it is not right to say that the exalted Buddha lived in the world of mankind." The Theravādins did not agree with them. Buddhaghosa also pointed out how the passage should be interpreted.

<sup>3</sup> See, e.g., *Sad. Sañ.* (JPTS., 1890), p. 69:

Sambuddhānam dve kāyā rūpakāyo sirīdharo,  
Yo tehi desito dhammo dhammakāyo ti vuccati.



every way and glorified by sīla, samādhi, etc.,<sup>1</sup> full of splendour and virtue, incomparable and fully awakened ).<sup>2</sup>

Though Buddhaghosa's conception was realistic, he was not immune from the religious bias of attributing super-human powers to Buddha. In the *Atthasālini*<sup>3</sup> he says that during the three months of his absence from the world while Buddha was engaged in preaching Abhidhamma to his mother in the Tusita heaven, he created some *Nimmita-buddhas* as exact replicas of himself. These Nimmitabuddhas could not be distinguished from the real Buddha in voice, words and even the rays of light that issued forth from his body. The created Buddhas could be detected only by the gods of the higher classes and not by the ordinary gods or men of the world.

In short, the early Hinayānists conceived Buddha's *rūpa-kāya* as that of a human being,<sup>4</sup> and his *dharmakāya* as the collection of his dhammas, i.e., doctrines and disciplinary rules collectively.

#### CONCEPTION OF THE SARVĀSTIVĀDINS

The other school, the Sarvāstivādins, who retained the realistic conception of Buddha, differed a little from the Theravādins. Unfortunately their original Piṭakas in Sanskrit are lost beyond recovery and we have to depend for our information about them on the few fragmentary pieces of their literature discovered in Central Asia, or on the Chinese translations of their Āgamas, in which again very little spade-work has yet been done.<sup>5</sup> Our main source of information at present is the *Abhidharmakośa*, made accessible to us from Chinese by the monumental French transla-

<sup>1</sup> The five khandhas referred to here are, sīla samādhi, paññā, vimutti and vimuttiñāṇadassana. See *Mil.*, p. 98.

<sup>2</sup> *Vis. M.*, p. 234; *Jātaka*, I, p. 84: Rūpakāyasirī.

<sup>3</sup> *Attha.*, p. 16.

<sup>4</sup> See Prof. Vallée Poussin's *Bouddhisme*, pp. 232f.

<sup>5</sup> Dr. Chizen Akanuma (*Eastern Buddhist*, II, p. 7) quotes some passages from the Chinese Aṅguttara and Saṃyukta Āgamas and shows that the *dharmakāya* of Buddha denoted the collection of dharma (teachings).



tion of Professor La Vallée Poussin. The *Kośa*, again, it should be noted, is the work of a systematiser and the production of a time much later than that of the Āgamas, to which it bears the same relation as the *Visuddhimagga* does to the Pāli Piṭakas. As the present state of our knowledge indicates that the *Divyāvadāna* and the *Lalitavistara*<sup>1</sup> originally belonged to this school, though they were recast by the Mahāyānists, we must examine with caution some of the statements found in them regarding the kāya conception.

### 1. *Divyāvadāna*

There are a few passages in the *Divyāvadāna* throwing light on the rūpakāya and dharmakāya of Buddha and bearing the identical sense of the Pāli works. On one occasion Śroṇa Koṭikarna said that, through the grace of his teacher, he had seen the dharmakāya of Buddha, but as he was anxious to see the rūpakāya, he wanted to go to the place where Buddha was living at the time.<sup>2</sup> Upagupta once said to Māra that he had seen the dharmakāya only and requested him to show him the rūpakāya. Māra thereupon made an image (vighraha) of Buddha replete with all the major and minor signs of great men.<sup>3</sup> In the answer that king Rudrāyaṇa gave to Bimbisāra that “na rājan kṛpaṇo loke dharmakāyena saṁspr̥śet” [let not, O King, an irreligious person<sup>4</sup> attain (lit. touch) the dharmakāya], the word “dharmakāya” may bear a metaphysical interpretation but the context does not warrant it.<sup>5</sup> The remark made by Aśoka, after Upagupta had pointed out to him the stūpa of Ānanda, makes the sense of dharmakāya quite explicit. It runs thus: ‘That body which you all call pure, excellent and made of dharma (dharmātmano dharmamayo) was borne (dhāritam) by him called Viśoka (=Ānanda) and therefore his stūpa deserves great honour. The lamp of dharma, the

<sup>1</sup> Winternitz, *Geschichte etc.*, II, p. 194.

<sup>2</sup> *Divyā.*, p. 19.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 360.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 560 : kṛpaṇa is defined thus :

yas tu dharmavirāgārtham adharme nirato nṛpaḥ,  
sa rājan kṛpaṇo jñeyas tamastamahparāyaṇaḥ.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 560.



dispeller of the darkness of afflictions that burnt still among men was due to the power of him, the son of Sugatendra, and therefore, should be worshipped with special reverence.<sup>1</sup>

There are, however, Avadānas in the *Divyāvadāna*, which were not without some Mahāyānic tint, for, we read in the *Rudrāyaṇāvadāna*,<sup>2</sup> as we usually find in the Mahāyānic works, that rays of light issued forth from Buddha's mouth when he smiled, irradiating the beings of heaven and hell. It is noteworthy that the *Atthasālinī*<sup>3</sup> also speaks of raśmis (rays of light) of six colours issuing out of Buddha's body. It seems that the Mahāyānic ideas were percolating gradually into the rocky soil of the conservative Theravādins.

## II. *Lalitavistara*

The *Lalitavistara* gives us a picture of Buddha more superhuman than human and yet far from the Mahāyānic conceptions of the Sambhogakāya and Dharmakāya, though in the last two chapters it dwells on the doctrine of Tathatā. In the *Lalitavistara* Buddha is deified but there are no traces of the Trikāya conception. It says in many places that Buddha appears in the world of men for *lokānuvartana*<sup>4</sup> (i.e. to follow the ways of the world), which, if he so desired, he could avoid by remaining in one of the heavens and attaining emancipation there. The running account of Buddha's life is interrupted at times—probably they are afterthoughts of the compiler—by dialogues between Buddha and Ānanda, in order to make the treatise appear Mahāyānic and not Hīnayānic. At one place Buddha explains to Ānanda that, unlike human beings, he did not stay in the filth of mother's womb but in a jewel-casket (*ratnavyūha*)<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Divyā.*, pp. 396-7. Cf. Przyluski, *Asoka*, p. 408: In connection with the destruction of the law, Mahāmāyā exclaimed Ceux qui sont nés du Corps de la Loi (dharmakāya), ou sont-ils allés ?

<sup>2</sup> *Divyā.*, xxxvii, p. 568.

<sup>3</sup> *Attha.*, p. 16.

<sup>4</sup> E.g., *Mtu.*, I, pp. 168, 170.

<sup>5</sup> *Lal. Vis.*, pp. 88, 105, 106. This formed one of the points of contention of the Mahāsāṅghikas. See Masuda, *Early Origin etc.*, in the *Asia Major*, Vol. II.



placed in the womb, which was as hard as adamant but soft to the touch like the down of a Kācilindika bird, and that his birth and other events connected with it were all superhuman. At the same time he prophesies that there will be, in the future, men unrestrained in act, thought and speech, ignorant, faithless, proud, believing without deliberation what is heard by them, who will not believe in the superhuman nature of his birth.<sup>1</sup> One can perceive through the poetical exaggerations of the *Lalitavistara* that it has in view the historical Buddha endowed with the major and minor signs—a human being after all, who requires to be reminded by the heavenly musicians of the acts of his past lives and his resolution to become a Buddha and rescue beings from misery, and who needs a stimulus to renounce the world in order to fulfil his resolution.<sup>2</sup> In connection with the offer of houses which was made by the gods to the Bodhisattva when he was in the womb, it is said that in order to please all the gods who offered houses he caused the appearance of his pregnant mother Māyādevi in each of those houses by means of the Mahāvvyūha samādhi. This does not clearly reflect any idea of Nirmāṇakāya—it appears more like some of the miracles mentioned in the *Nikāyas*. In the last chapter of the *Lalitavistara* where Buddha's attributes are mentioned, he is called the great tree (mahādruma), because he possesses a body of Dharmakāya-jñāna (the knowledge of Dharmakāya).<sup>3</sup> As this chapter is very likely a Mahāyāna addition, we may reasonably say that the *Lalitavistara* in its original form as a treatise of the Sarvāstivādins viewed Buddha as a human being with superhuman attributes.

### III. *Abhidharmakośa*

We may now consider the writings of Vasubandhu, the great exponent of the Sarvāstivāda school. In his *Abhidharmakośa* he imported a new meaning into the words Dharma-

<sup>1</sup> *Lal. Vis.*, pp. 87ff. This goes against the Sarvāstivāda and Theravāda conceptions.

<sup>2</sup> The descriptions gave opportunity to the Mahāyānists to invent Upāyakaṣālya Pāramitā, the duties of Adhyeṣaṇā, Yācanā, etc.

<sup>3</sup> *Lal. Vis.*, p. 428.



kāya and Rūpakāya. In examining the three Śaraṇas, he tried to bring out the real sense of Buddha, Dharma, and Saṅgha in which a devotee takes refuge. He said that those who take refuge in Buddha do, in fact, take refuge in the dharmas (qualities) which constitute a Buddha (buddha-kāraka), i.e., the dharmas by the acquisition of which a certain person is called a Buddha, or in other words, the dharmas by the acquisition of which a person understands all things. These dharmas are kṣayajñāna (knowledge of the destruction of misery), anutpādayajñāna<sup>1</sup> (knowledge of the further non-origination of misery), and samyagdr̥ṣṭi (right view) of the Aśaikṣas together with the dharmas attendant on the jñāna, viz., the five pure skandhas. A dharmakāya is formed of these dharmas. In another place, while showing the sameness of the Dharmakāyas of all Buddhas, he explained the Dharmakāya as a series of pure dharmas, or rather a renewal of the psycho-physical organism of the substratum (anāsravadharmasamtāna, āśrayaparāvṛtti).<sup>2</sup> The Dharmakāya then signifies a new purified personality or substratum (āśraya), but it is pointed out that such a dharmakāya is possessed also by an arhat.<sup>3</sup> In the *Sūtrālamkāra*<sup>4</sup> such a dharmakāya is attributed to the mother of

<sup>1</sup> *Kośa*, VI, 67 explains that Kṣayajñāna with Anutpādayajñāna makes Bodhi. On account of difference among saints in the acquisition of these jñānas, Bodhi is said to be of three kinds: Śrāvaka-bodhi, Pratyekabuddhabodhi and Anuttarasamyaksambodhi. By the above two jñānas one completely abandons ignorance (aśeṣāvidyā-prahāṇāt); by the first, one realises the truth that his task is accomplished (i.e., the duḥkha has been realised by him); by the second, one realises that his task is no more to be accomplished (i.e., the duḥkha has been realised by him and he will not have to exert any more.)

The samyagdr̥ṣṭi of the Aśaikṣas is to see things as they are really, to know truly the general character (sāmānyalakṣaṇa) of dharmas. See *Kośa*, VI, 50 fn. For a note on the Kṣayajñāna, see Masuda, *Early Origin etc.*, in *Asia Major*, Vol. II, Fasc. I.

<sup>2</sup> *Kośa*, VII, 34; for the sense of āśraya see *Ibid.*, VIII, 34 fn. Cf. āśraya pariśuddhi in *Sūtrā.*, p. 186.

<sup>3</sup> *Kośa*, IV, 56.

<sup>4</sup> Hüber, *Sūtrālamkāra*, pp. 217, 390 quoted in the *Kośa*, VII, 32. p. 81.



Śākyamuni or to an advanced upāsaka. Thus we see that the *Kośa* has two interpretations of the Dharmakāya, one being the qualities adhering to a Buddha and the other the purified personality (āśraya) possessed by him. The *Kośa*, in fact, replaces the concrete conceptions of the Dharmakāya found in the *Nikāyas* and the *Divyāvadāna* by an abstract one. In the last two works the Dharmakāya signified only the doctrines, viz., the Bodhipakkhiya dharmas or Anicca, Dukkha and Anatta, together with the *Vinaya* rules contained in the *Pātimokkha*, while to Vasubandhu it meant the qualities adhering to a Buddha as well as the purified personality (āśraya).

Referring to the formulæ of the Śaraṇas, Vasubandhu says that as the physical body (rūpakāya) of Buddha does not undergo any modification by the acquisition of the quality of Buddha, one should not take refuge in the rūpakāya of Buddha, which is, in fact, the rūpakāya of the Bodhisattva and hence sāsrava (impure). Just as a man would respect a monk for the qualities adhering to him and not for his person, so a devotee should take refuge in Buddhata and not in Buddha the person. In the same way Vasubandhu explains the two other śaraṇas, viz., Dharma and Saṅgha, the former being explained as Nirvāṇa, or the three Truths—Duhkha, Samudaya and Mārga, or Sukha, Duhkha and Asukha-aduhkha—and the latter as the qualities that a saṅgha of monks is expected to possess.<sup>1</sup>

The *Vibhāṣā* informs us that there are some who believe that to take refuge in Buddha is to take refuge in the body constituted by the head, nape of the neck, belly, back, hands and feet of the Tathāgata. Some say that as the body is born of parents, it is impure (sāsrava) and therefore it should not be a place of refuge. The refuge should be the Aśaikṣa dharmas, which make a Buddha, i.e., the Dharmakāya.<sup>2</sup> Apparently the *Vibhāṣā* refers in the first

<sup>1</sup> Compare the formula of Śaraṇa in the *Nikāyas*, e.g., *Dīgha*, III, p. 227.

<sup>2</sup> *Kośa*, VI, p. 32; IV, p. 76n.; VIII, p. 34.



case to the earlier Hinayāna schools and in the second to the Sarvāstivādins and their followers.

SIMILAR DHARMAKĀYA CONCEPTION AMONG THE SATYASIDDHIS  
AND THE MAHĀYĀNISTS

The Satyasiddhi school takes almost the same view of the Dharmakāya as the Sarvāstivādins. According to it the Dharmakāya is made of śīla, samādhi, praññā, vimukti and vimuktiññānadarsana dharmakāyas. Buddhaghosa, Nāgārjuna and the writer of the *Milindapañha* also refer to such a dharmakāya.<sup>1</sup> It means that the body of Buddha was purified by the practices of these five skandhas, and hence it can be called Dharmakāya. But as these purifications are obtained by Arhats also, Harivarman, the founder of the Satyasiddhi school, distinguished the Dharmakāya of Buddha by saying that his Dharmakāya consisted not only of the above five purificatory practices but also of ten powers (daśa bala), four proficiencies (vaiśāradya) and the three recollections (smṛtyupasthāna), which the Arhats cannot obtain.<sup>2</sup>

The *Abhisamayālaṅkārikā*<sup>3</sup> and the *Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā-prajñāpāramitā*,<sup>4</sup> important text-books of the Yogācāra school, define the Dharmakāya with a similar sense. They say that the various dharmas, viz., Bodhipakṣikas, Apramāṇas, Vimokṣas, Samāpattis and so forth, constitute Sarvajñatā (omniscience) and Sarvajñatā is the Dharmakāya. It should be noted that the *Kārikā* and the *Prajñāpāramitā* use this expression in a sense different from that current in the Mahāyāna texts. They really mean the Svasambhogakāya of the later Vijñānavādins.

The *Prajñāpāramitās* also maintain the conception that the Dharmakāya is produced by dharmas, the highest of which is, according to them, the praññāpāramitā, i.e., the knowledge which helps a person to realise the dharma-śūnyatā. The *Aṣṭasāhasrikā* takes up the question whether the honour shown to the relics of the Tathāgatakāya is more meritorious

<sup>1</sup> *Vis. M.*, p. 234; *M. Vr.* (as opinion of non-Mādhyamikas), p. 433; *Mil.*, p. 98.

<sup>2</sup> Sogen, *Systems etc.*, pp. 181, 182.

<sup>3</sup> *Kārikā*, ch. viii.

<sup>4</sup> *Pañca.*, (ASB. ms.) leaf 224a.



than the honour shown to the *Prajñāpāramitā*, e.g., by making a copy of it. The answer given is that the relics depend on the body purified by the *prajñāpāramitā*, and therefore it is the source of Buddhas. The source deserves more honour than the remnants of the fruit (i.e., relics of Buddha) produced therefrom, and therefore it is more meritorious to honour the *Prajñāpāramitā* than the relics.<sup>1</sup> It adds that all teachings of Buddha issue from the *Prajñāpāramitā*, and the *Dharmabhāṇakas* preserve and propagate them; so the *Dharmabhāṇakas* should also be respected. They are protected by the *Dharmakāya*, the *Prajñāpāramitā*. *Sarvajñatā* (omniscience) is pervaded (*paribhāvita*) by the *prajñāpāramitā*; from *sarvajñatā* issues the body of Tathāgata, the relics of whom are worshipped; hence *prajñāpāramitā* deserves greater honour.<sup>2</sup>

HĪNAYĀNIC SPECULATIONS: (a) WHETHER RŪPAKĀYA IS  
VIPĀKAJA ?

The *Kośa* maintains that the *rūpakāya* of Buddha endowed with the major and minor signs is the result of the excellent karmas of his previous lives. According to it, even the Buddhas cannot escape the effects of their karma. The schism created by Devadatta in the saṅgha is attributed to a deed in one of the previous lives of Śākyamuni. The *Vyākhyā* and the *Vibhāṣā* explain that it happened to Śākyamuni only, and not to the other Buddhas, because in one of his former lives he sowed dissension among the disciples of an ascetic, possessed of five abhiññās.<sup>3</sup> That the Buddhas enjoy or suffer the effects of karma is also maintained by the *Divyāvadāna*<sup>4</sup> and the *Majjhima Nikāya*.<sup>5</sup> The *Divyāvadāna* refers to a saying of Śākyamuni that even the Jinas themselves are not free from their karmas, while the *Majjhima Nikāya* says that a Tathāgata performs good deeds in his previous lives, and as a result of these he enjoys in the

<sup>1</sup> *Aṣṭa.*, ch. iv.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 99. It is from this conception that the *Prajñāpāramitā* is addressed as the mother of Buddhas.

<sup>3</sup> *Kośa*, VII, 34, p. 8 fn., 84; IV, 102, p. 212 fn. 2.

<sup>4</sup> *Divyā.*, p. 416.

<sup>5</sup> *Majjhima*, III, p. 227.



present, pure and pleasant sensations (*vedanā*) only. Tradition says that when Buddha was hurt by the splinter of stone thrown by Devadatta, he said that ninety-one kalpas ago he had hurt a person by a spear, as the result of which evil deed, he now received a wound.

The *Milindapañha*, however, takes a different view of this matter. Admitting that Devadatta created a schism in the saṅgha, it says that as the schism was not created by any act of Buddha's own and as it was caused by an external influence, it should not be said that Buddha as the result of his *karma* had a divided assembly (*bhejjapariso*). In a similar way it explains away the wound or the illnesses from which Buddha suffered. First it asserts that Buddha attained omniscience after uprooting all roots of evil (*akusalamūlas*); so he could not have any more sufferings through *karma*. It then says that apart from *karma* there are other causes like the three humours, seasons, etc., which produce *vedanā* (feelings). According to it, the wound that Buddha received was due to an *opakammika* (accidental) cause and his illnesses to causes other than *karma*.<sup>1</sup>

(b) WAS BUDDHA A JARĀYUJA OR UPAPĀDUKA ?

In order to remove doubt from the minds of the people as to the nature of the birth of so great and meritorious a being as the Bodhisattva in his last existence—a doubt expressed also in the *Lalitavistara*, where a *ratnavyūha* has been devised for the Bodhisattva's abode in his mother's womb—the *Kośa*<sup>2</sup> proceeds to show that the Bodhisattvas possess the power of choosing the manner of their birth (*upapattivaśitva*), and that Śākyamuni chose birth in a womb (*jarāyu*) with two objects. One was to benefit the Śākya clan and at the same time not to give opportunity to the people to consider him a magician or a god or a demon, and the other was to leave some relics of his body, by worshipping which men and other beings would go to heaven by thousands, or attain deliverance.

The Mahāsāṅghikas and their followers<sup>3</sup> assert that

<sup>1</sup> *Mil.*, pp. 134f.

<sup>2</sup> *Kośa*, III, 9.

<sup>3</sup> *E.g.*, the Vetulyakas.



Śākyamuni was an upapāduka (self-born), and that even his son Rāhula was also an upapāduka, for Bodhisattvas cannot have kāma. They assert that Bodhisattvas are possessed of 'ādhiṣṭhāniki ṛddhi' (i.e., the power of appearing anywhere and in any form), and that by that power Śākyamuni made a seeming show of his existence in the womb of Māyā. They conceived Buddha as *lokottara* (transcendental), and Śākyamuni as only a phantom (Nirmāṇakāya). The transcendental Buddha has a rūpakāya which is limitless, everlasting, free from all sāsrava dharmas. He is always in samādhi,<sup>1</sup> never sleeps or dreams, and can know everything in an instant of thought. He knows neither fatigue nor rest, and is ever busy in enlightening sentient beings. His power and his life are limitless. For the benefit of sentient beings he appears at will in any one of the six gatis. Whatever he utters relates to the truth, though people may understand him differently. In short, the Mahāsāṅghikas conceived Buddha as a totally supermundane being with illimitable powers and knowledge, who never desired to attain Nirvāṇa.<sup>2</sup>

#### KĀYA CONCEPTION AT THE BEGINNING OF MAHĀYĀNA

The Mahāyānists incorporated the Nirmāṇakāya conception of the Mahāsāṅghikas into their Trikāya theory, adding the two other, Sambhogakāya and Dharmakāya, the former approaching the Mahāsāṅghika conception of the transcendental Buddha, and the latter being a new philosophic conception of the Mahāyānists.

These new Kāya conceptions, it seems, did not make much of an appeal at the beginning of Mahāyāna. The *Saddharma-Puṇḍarīka* and the *Suvarṇaprabhāsa* tried to erase from the minds of the people the lingering impression about the historical existence of Śākyamuni. In the *Puṇḍarīka*<sup>3</sup> we find

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Laṅkā.*, p. 240 : sadā samāhitās ca tathāgatāḥ.

<sup>2</sup> For details see Masuda's *Origin and Doctrines of Early Indian Buddhist Schools*, Asia Major, vol. II, fasc. I; Anesaki's article in the *E.R.E.*, sv. *Docetism* (Buddhist); Suzuki's *Outlines of Mahāyāna Buddhism*, pp. 249-251. See also *Kośa*, III, 9 referring to *Mtu.*, I, pp. 145, 154.

<sup>3</sup> *Sad. P.*, pp. 311ff.



Maitreya assuming the rôle of a sceptic and enquiring how Buddha could, within a short space of forty years after the attainment of Bodhi at Gayā, perform the innumerable duties of a Tathāgata and lead incalculable bodhisattvas to Buddhahood. It appears like the paradox of a man of twenty-five years claiming centenarians as his sons and the latter calling him their father. Similarly Buddha's pointing to Bodhisattvas who had been performing the various duties conducive to Buddhahood for many millions of years as his disciples appears paradoxical. Maitreya says further that in the minds of those Bodhisattvas who recently became Mahāyānists (*navayānasamprasthitāḥ*) there may be doubts of this nature; so the Tathāgata should explain the paradox for the welfare of the religion. Buddha then asks his audience thrice to believe his words (*avakalpayadhvam abhiśraddaddhvaṃ*), and says, "It is not to be considered (*naiva draṣṭavyam*) that Bhagavān Śākyamuni lately leaving his family attained Bodhi at Gayā. I attained sambodhi incalculable ages ago, and since then I have been preaching the dharma. All that I have said about the previous Tathāgatas, Dipaṅkara etc., and their parinirvāṇa were all my own creations. They were only my expedients for imparting the dharma (*upāyakaśālyadharmadeśanābhinirhāranirmitāni*). All that I have said to the effect that I was young, recently born, left home, and attained Bodhi, was to appeal to a class of people who otherwise would not have been convinced of the excellence of the religion and derived benefits therefrom. But all that I said was not untrue, as the Tathāgatas know what the three dhātus really are; they know that the dhātus neither are born nor die, neither produce nor non-produce, neither exist nor non-exist; neither are they the same nor different, and they are neither true nor false. All that the Tathāgatas say is true, but people devoid of right knowledge construe different meanings out of it. Though I have not attained parinirvāṇa, I say that I have attained it. In order to rouse curiosity in the minds of the people and a desire to see Buddha, I say that the appearance of a Buddha is an exceedingly rare event. I made a show of the Nirvāṇa, but did not enter into it,



but people with distorted views could not see my real self, and busied themselves with the worship of my relics. But this also produced a good effect, for they thereby became righteous and gave up their passions. From among them I formed my śrāvakaśaṅgha, and showed myself at Gr̥dhra-kūṭa, and explained to them how to attain the agrabodhi”.

In the *Suvarṇaprabhāsa*<sup>1</sup> Ruciraketu and Kaundilya the brāhmaṇa play the rôle of the sceptics. The former enquires why Śākyamuni, who performed so many meritorious deeds, should have such a short span of life as eighty years. The latter seeks a mustard-like relic of Buddha's body to worship and thus go to heaven. Ruciraketu is told by the Buddhas of all lokadhātus that they did not know any man or god who could calculate the length of Śākyamuni's life. They said that it might be possible to count the drops of water in a sea but it would be impossible to ascertain the length of his life. Kaundilya brāhmaṇa, who only feigned ignorance, was told by Litsavikumāra that, just as it is absurd to expect cocoanuts from a rose-apple tree, so it is absurd to expect a relic from the Buddhakāya. The Tathāgatas have no origin, they are ever existing and inconceivable. It is only the Nirmitakāya that is shown by them. How can a body, in which there is no bone or blood, leave a dhātu (relic)? Buddhas have only Dharmakāya and there is only the Dharmadhātu.

#### NIRMĀṆAKĀYA

The Mahāyānic texts tried to show, on the one hand, that the Hīnayānists were wrong in their belief that Śākyamuni was really a man of flesh and blood and that relics of his body existed, while on the other hand, they introduced the two conceptions of Nirmāṇakāya and Buddhakāya. Whatever is said to have been done by Śākyamuni is accounted for by these texts as the apparent doings of a phantom of the Buddhakāya, a shadowy image created to follow the ways of the world (lokānuvartana),<sup>2</sup> in order to bring con-

<sup>1</sup> *Suvarṇaprabhāsa* (B.T.S. ed.), pp. 4-8.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Mtu.*, I, pp. 168, 170.



viction to the hearts of the people that the attainment of Buddhahood was not an impossibility. As the Buddhas possess the knowledge of all that is to be done (*kr̥tyānuṣṭhāna-jñāna*),<sup>1</sup> they can take any form they desire for the illumination of the various classes of beings. The Mahāyānic conception of the Nirmāṇakāya is essentially the same as that of the Mahāsāṅghikas.

The *Prajñāpāramitās* in their quaint way refer to the Nirmāṇakāya or Rūpakāya. The *Pañcaviṃśati* says that a bodhisattva, after acquiring all the necessary dharmas and practising *prajñāpāramitā*, becomes Sambuddha. He then renders service to beings of all lokadhātus (worlds) of the ten corners at all times by Nirmāṇamegha (Nirmāṇa clouds). This is called the Nirmāṇikā-kāya.<sup>2</sup>

From the Chinese sources<sup>3</sup> we are informed that Nāgārjuna in his commentary on the *Prajñāpāramitā*, called the *Mahāprajñāpāramitā śāstra*, speaks of two kāyas, rūpakāya and dharmakāya. The former is the body born of parents, possessing the qualities of sentient beings, and is subject to human frailties. It was born in Kośala while his dharmakāya was born at Rājagṛha. The material body was necessary for "earthly truth". It was for the deliverance of beings that Buddha assumed different bodies, different names, birth-places and ways of emancipation. This interpretation of rūpa- and dharma-kāyas is also followed in the Chinese *Parinirvāṇasūtra* and *Sandhinirmocanasūtra*.<sup>4</sup>

Some of the Yogācāra texts furnish us with the following information regarding the conception of Nirmāṇakāya as prevailing among the Yogācārins:

(i) The *Sūtrālaṅkāra*<sup>5</sup> explains the Nirmāṇakāya to be those forms which are assumed by Buddhas to render service to beings of the various worlds. It generally refers to the human form that Buddha takes in order to make a show of

<sup>1</sup> One of the four jñānas peculiar to Buddha, see *Mvyut.*, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup> *Pañca*. (Cambr. ms.), leaf 343b.

<sup>3</sup> C. Akanuma, *E.B.*, II, pp. 17ff.; Masuda, *Die Individualistische etc.*, p. 60.

<sup>4</sup> *E.B.*, II, pp. 21f.

<sup>5</sup> *Sūtrā.*, p. 45.



his acquiring the ordinary arts and crafts required by an average man, living a family life and then retiring from it, and ultimately attaining Nirvāṇa by a recourse to ascetic practices.

(ii) The *Vijñaptimātratāsiddhi* tells us that the Nirmāṇakāya is meant for Śrāvakas, Pratyekabuddhas, Pṛthagjanas (common men) and Bodhisattvas who are not yet in one of the ten bhūmis. It may appear in all lands whether pure or impure.<sup>1</sup> The Chinese commentaries on the *Siddhi* mention the various ways in which Buddha can transform his body or another's body or voice, and his or others' mind, to suit his purpose. Not only could he transform himself into Śākyamuni, or Śāriputra into a young girl, but also could create an altogether new apparitional body, not, of course, a living, thinking being.<sup>2</sup> Often he assumed the voice of Brahmā or expressed himself through the mouth of Śāriputra or Subhūti, and it was for this reason that we find Śāriputra or Subhūti explaining some of the abstruse Mahāyāna teachings, which they themselves were not expected to understand.<sup>3</sup> The third way in which he could transform his voice was to produce sounds from the sky. His thoughts were supramundane (lokottara) and pure (anāsrava). He could produce in his mind any thought he liked; in fact, he appeared in his Nirmitakāya as Śākyamuni with a mind (citta) suited to the ways of the world. He could also impose his thoughts on the minds of others.

(iii) The *Abhisamayālaṅkārikā* states that there are four kāyas, of which the Svābhāvikakāya is real, and the three others, viz., Dharmakāya (=Svasambhogakāya), Sambhogakāya (=Parasambhogakāya) and Nirmāṇakāya are sāmvrta (i.e. unreal); these are meant for Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and Śrāvakas respectively. According to it, the Nirmāṇakāya was intended for Śrāvakas and Bodhisattvas who are not yet in one of the ten bhūmis. It describes the Nirmāṇakāya as a body unsevered from the real kāya, and

<sup>1</sup> Masuda, *Die Individualistische etc.*, p. 60.

<sup>2</sup> I have derived this information from Prof. La Vallée Poussin.

<sup>3</sup> See *Aṣṭa.*, pp. 14, 33, 414.



as the actions performed by it are similarly unsevered from the kāya, they should be regarded as asaṃsāra (transcendental, i.e., not worldly). Then it proceeds to show that the thirty-seven kinds of purificatory actions performed by the Nirmāṇakāya are really the actions of the Dharmakāya. The thirty-seven actions, as explained by it, are the thirty-seven steps through which a Nirmāṇakāya passes after its inception. They are as follows:<sup>1</sup> A Nirmāṇakāya (i) is unmindful of good or bad forms of existence; in other words, takes birth as an animal, human being or god as necessities require—this is called *gatiprasāma*; (ii) practises the four *saṃgrahavastus* (elements of popularity); (iii) enlightens himself about matters opposite and similar, good and evil, by the *śrutamayī* and such other means of knowledge, and then applies himself to the service of others, keeping himself unconcerned (i.e., having no *anunaya*, like a magician for the things made by him magically); (iv) practises the six *pāramitās* purified in three ways *trimaṇḍalavīśuddha*; (v) performs, and persuades others to perform the ten *kuśalakarmapathas* (moral duties) and thus establish all in the path leading to Buddhahood; (vi) exerts for realising the non-existence in reality of all things; (vii) comprehends the non-duality of things and the all-pervasiveness of the dharmadhātu, and so on, until he reaches the Tathāgata-bhūmi after realising the absence of difference between things constituted and unconstituted.<sup>2</sup> In short, the *Kārikā* wants to say that the whole course of life of a Bodhisattva, extending through incalculable births, is nothing but the Nirmāṇakāya, a thing not separate from the Dharmakāya, as, in fact, according to the Mahāyāna philosophy, all creations are neither the same as, nor different from, the dharmadhātu.

(iv) The *Laṅkāvatāra* explains the relation of Nirmāṇakāya to Dharmakāya in the same way as the *Kārikā*. It states that Nirmitabuddhas are not produced by actions; the Tathāgata is neither in them nor outside them (*sarve hi nirmita-*

<sup>1</sup> J.A., 1913, p. 604.

<sup>2</sup> *Kārikā*, ch. viii; also J.A., 1913, pp. 599, 600.



buddhā na karma-prabhavā na teṣu tathāgato na cānyatra tebhyaḥ tathāgataḥ).<sup>1</sup> It is only when the sons of the Jina realise the visible world to have no existence apart from the *citta* that they obtain the Nirmāṇakāya free from *kriyā* and *saṃskāra*, and endowed with *bala*, *abhiññā* and *vaśitā*.<sup>2</sup> Like the *Siddhi*, it says that the Tathāgatas by creating Nirmāṇakāya perform the various duties of a Tathāgata (Tathāgata-kṛtya).<sup>3</sup> It gives also the interesting information that Vajrapāṇi serves as an attendant on the Nirmitanirmāṇa-buddhas, and not on the real Buddhas,<sup>4</sup> and that the function of such a Buddha is to preach and explain the characteristics of dāna, śīla, dhyāna, samādhi, citta, prajñā, jñāna, skandha, dhātu, āyatana, vimokṣa, and vijñāna.<sup>5</sup>

#### SAMBHOGAKĀYA

We have seen that the Rūpakāya or Nirmāṇakāya was meant for the Śrāvakas, Pratyekabuddhas, Prthagjanas and Bodhisattvas who were not in one of the ten bhūmis, so another kāya had to be devised, a very subtle kāya; for the benefit of all Bodhisattvas. This is called Parasambhogakāya, as distinguished from Svasambhogakāya, a similar subtle body perceived by the Buddhas alone. It is this Parasambhogakāya which plays the rôle of a preacher of the various Mahāyāna sūtras, the scenes being mostly laid either at Gr̥dhrakūṭa, the only place in the three dhātus considered pure and suitable for the appearance of a Sambhogakāya, or in the Sukhāvati-vyūha, or in one of the heavens.

It will be observed from the description of the appearance of Buddha and his manner of preaching the Sūtras that the Mahāyānists were not yet able to forget or rise above the human conception of the Hīnayānists. They still gave Śākyamuni the rôle of the presiding Buddha of the universe, to whom flocked reverently with flowers, incense, etc., all the Bodhisattvas, Śrāvakas and Gr̥hapatis of the various loka-dhātus of the ten directions, to hear from him the *Prajñā*-

<sup>1</sup> *Laṅkā.*, p. 242.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 73.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 240.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 242.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 57.



*pāramitā*, the *Saddharmapundarikā*, or the *Gaṇḍavyūha*. These Bodhisattvas again had their own tutelary Buddhas, who, according to the Mahāyāna metaphysics, possessed the same Dharmakāya as Śākyamuni. They also came or were sometimes sent by their Buddhas, with messages of greetings and flowers as tokens of their regard, to Śākyamuni Buddha, whose Buddhakṣetra was then the Sahā lokadhātu. Sometimes the descriptions go so far as to say that the Buddhas themselves came to hear discourses from Śākyamuni Buddha, and the concourse of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas became so great that the Sahā lokadhātu had to be cleared of all oceans, mountains, seas, rivers, and cities, as well as gods, men and other beings. As we read in the Hīnayāna texts that monks used to come to meet Buddha, bringing with them one or two sāmaṇeras, so also we read in the *Saddharma-Pundarikā* that on account of insufficiency of space the countless Buddhas could not bring with them more than one or two Bodhisattvas as attendants (*upasthāpakas*).<sup>1</sup>

Now let us see what was their conception of the Kāya of this Buddha. According to the *Śatasāhasrikā* and the *Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā*,<sup>2</sup> it is an exceedingly refulgent body, from every pore of which streamed forth countless brilliant rays of light, illuminating the lokadhātus as innumerable as the sands of the Ganges. When this body stretched out its tongue, innumerable rays of light issued forth from it, and on each ray of light was found a lotus of thousand petals on which was seated a Tathāgatavigraha (an image of the Tathāgata, a sort of Nirmāṇakāya), preaching to Bodhisattvas, Grhasthas (householders), Pravrajitas (recluses) and others the dharma consisting of the six pāramitās. After a *Simhavikrīḍita samādhi* his body illuminated the trisāhasra-mahāsahasra lokadhātu just as the bright clear sun or the full moon illuminates the world. Buddha then shows his *Prakṛtyātmabhāva* (real form) to all the worlds. The several classes of gods as well as the men of the four continents,

<sup>1</sup> *Sad. P.*, pp. 244-245.

<sup>2</sup> *Sata.*, pp. 8-29; *Pañca.*, pp. 6ff.; for 'Āsecanaka' see *Samādhirājasūtra* (B.T.S. ed.), p. 10.



Jambudvīpa, Aparagodāna, etc., see this *Prakṛtyātmabhāva* and think that the Tathāgata is sitting before them and preaching the doctrine. From this body again issue forth some rays of light by which all beings of all lokadhātus see Śākyamuni Buddha preaching the *Prajñāpāramitā* to his saṅgha of monks and congregation of Bodhisattvas.

Though this conception of the refulgent body of Buddha found currency in the *Prajñāpāramitās*, the expression *Sambhogakāya* was still unknown to them. It was usually called by them *Prakṛtyātmabhāva* (natural body) or *Āsecanaka-ātmabhāva* (all-diffusing body). As a matter of fact, the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā* is not even aware of the *Prakṛtyātmabhāva* or *Āsecanaka-ātmabhāva*, showing clearly its priority to the other *Prajñāpāramitās*. It speaks only of *Rūpakāya* and *Dharmakāya*<sup>1</sup> and the long glorious description of *Buddhakāya*, which appears in the *Śata-* and *Pañcaviṃśati-sāhasrikā* as *nidāna* (introduction) to the text, is totally absent from it. It is only in the recast version of the *Pañcaviṃśati* that the expression *Sāmbhogika-kāya* was introduced by way of giving a gist of the topic.<sup>2</sup> In it the *Sambhoga-kāya* is described thus: Bodhisattvas, after attaining bodhi by means of the *prajñāpāramitā*, take a body endowed with thirty-two major and eighty minor signs with a view to preach the doctrines of Mahāyāna to the bodhisattvas and at the same time to arouse in their minds joy, delight and love for the excellent dharma. The original *Prajñāpāramitā* regarded this refulgent kāya as *nirmita* (created), and as such they included it in *Rūpakāya* and did not feel the necessity of introducing the conception of a third kāya, the *Sāmbhogika*.

In keeping with this *dvikāya* theory of the *Prajñāpāramitās*, Nāgārjuna also did not refer to, or probably was not aware of, the third kāya, the *Sāmbhogika*. Both Drs. Akanuma and Masuda could not trace the conception of *Sambhogakāya* in Nāgārjuna's *Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sāstra*. Dr. Akanuma also mentions his disinclination to accept the "Hymns of the Triple Body (*Trikāya*)" ascribed by the

<sup>1</sup> *Aṣṭa.*, pp. 338, 497, 513.

<sup>2</sup> *Pañca.*, (A.S.B. ms.) leaf, 359a: *Iti Sāmbhogika-kāyaḥ*.



Tibetans to Nāgārjuna as a work of the famous Nāgārjuna.<sup>1</sup> If the *Kārikās* of Nāgārjuna on the Tathāgatakāya<sup>2</sup> be examined, it also becomes apparent that Nāgārjuna was interested in giving an exposition of the real kāya (i.e., Dharmakāya or Svabhāvakāya) only. To him the distinction of Sambhogakāya and Rūpakāya was unimportant, as both of them were unreal.

Thus, we see that up to the time of Nāgārjuna, the conception of Sambhogakāya was not distinguished from that of Rūpa- or Nirmāṇakāya. The *Laṅkāvatāra* presents us first with this conception, calling it Niṣyanda- or Dharmatā-niṣyanda-Buddha, and it seems that the term Sambhogakāya was not yet current. We have seen that in Hīnayāna works also it is pointed out that the super-excellent body of Buddha, endowed with the major and minor signs of great men, was due to the countless meritorious deeds performed by him in his previous lives.<sup>3</sup> The Chinese rendering of Sambhogakāya by *pao sheng*<sup>4</sup> 報身 in which *pao* means fruit or reward, also indicates that Sambhoga had no other sense than 'vipāka or niṣyanda'. The later Yogācārins called it Parasambhogakāya in order to distinguish it from the other kāya called by them Svasambhoga. Though the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā* does not distinguish Sambhogakāya from the Nirmāṇakāya, it refers to the super-excellent body of Buddha as the result of his meritorious acts in previous lives.<sup>5</sup> The *Laṅkāvatāra* by using the expression Vipākaja or Vipākastha, shows a stage of transition from the Hīnayānic conception of Vipākaja-kāya to that of Mahāyānic Parasambhogakāya.

The *Laṅkāvatāra* says that the function of the Niṣyanda Buddha is to teach the *parikalpita* (imaginary) and *paratantra* (relatively existent) nature of things to those persons, who weave a net of thought-constructions around themselves

<sup>1</sup> *Eastern Buddhist*, II, pp. 17ff.

<sup>2</sup> *M. Vr.*, Ch. XXII.

<sup>3</sup> *Laṅkā.*, pp. 28, 34; see ante.

<sup>4</sup> Sakaki, *Mvyut.* 117.

<sup>5</sup> *Aṣṭa.*, p. 515. Buddhānām kāyah kāraṇasamutpannaḥ pūrva-karmavipākād utpannaḥ, etc.



being unaware of the dream-like nature of things.<sup>1</sup> This is also the function of Śākyamuni of the Sahālokadhātu when he imparts the teaching of the *Prajñāpāramitās* or the *Saddharma-Puṇḍarīka*.<sup>2</sup>

The *Sūtrālaṅkāra* also does not distinguish Sambhogakāya into Svasambhoga and Parasambhoga. It says that with this body Buddhas enjoy the dharmas and it is different according to the different lokadhātus, implying thereby that a Buddha of each lokadhātu has his own Sambhogakāya which is different from those of other Buddhas of other Buddhakṣetras.<sup>3</sup>

(iii) The *Suvarṇaprabhāsa* and (iv) the *Abhisamayālaṅkārikā* tell us that the Sambhogakāya is a very subtle body of Buddha. It is endowed with all the mahāpuruṣa signs and is generally assumed by Buddhas for imparting the higher and metaphysical truths to the advanced bodhisattvas. The *Suvarṇaprabhāsa*<sup>4</sup> also does not speak of the two forms of Sambhogakāya, to be found in the *Siddhi*.

(v) The *Siddhi* says that there are two Sambhogakāyas called Parasambhogakāya and Svasambhogakāya. The former is seen by bodhisattvas, while the latter is seen by the Buddhas of the various lokadhātus, and not by bodhisattvas. As regards refulgence, illimitability and immeasurability there is no difference between these two kāyas. Both of them have colour and form (varṇa-rūpa-saṁsthāna) as well as sound (śabda). On account of the knowledge of sameness (samatā) obtained by Buddhas, the body is anāsrava (pure). It can appear only in a pure land like the Sukhāvatīvyūha or Gr̥dhrakūṭa. The difference between the Parasambhogakāya and the Svasambhogakāya are that the former has the mahāpuruṣalakṣaṇas while the latter has not, and that the *citta* of the former is as unreal as that of the Nirmāṇakāya, while the *citta* of the latter is real, and besides, this *citta*

<sup>1</sup> *Laṅkā.*, p. 57.

<sup>2</sup> The function of Nirmitabuddha is to teach dāna, śīla, etc., see ante.

<sup>3</sup> *Sūtrā.*, pp. 45-6.

<sup>4</sup> Suzuki, *Outlines etc.*, p. 257; in the published portion of the Sanskrit text (B.T.S.) this passage does not occur.



possesses the four jñānas, viz., ādarśajñāna (mirror-like knowledge),<sup>1</sup> samatā-jñāna (knowledge of the sameness of all things), pratyavekṣaṇā-jñāna (knowledge of distinguishing subject, object and the varieties of things) and kṛtyānuṣṭhāna-jñāna (knowledge of doing all that is to be done).<sup>2</sup> The rūpa of both the Sambhogakāyas is exceedingly subtle and expansive without limit, yet it is *sapratigha* (possessed of the quality of obstruction). Nevertheless the subtle bodies of countless Buddhas are interpenetrable.

The recast version of the *Pañcaviṃśati*<sup>3</sup> refers to the Sambhogakāya, and does not, like the *Kārikā*, distinguish between Dharmakāya (=Svasambhoga) and Parasambhogakāya, the reason being that in the original version of the *Pañcaviṃśati*, there must have been, as in the other *Prajñāpāramitās*, the conceptions of only two kāyas, and not of three or four. The *Kārikā*, in fact, supports the *Siddhi* in regard to the conception of kāyas, using only somewhat different names. The conception of the Svasambhogakāya shows a tendency of the Yogācāra school to posit something like the Īśvara of the Upaniṣads behind the phenomenal universe. The Dharmakāya corresponds to the impersonal Absolute of the Vedānta, the Brahman, and the Sambhogakāya to the Īśvara when Brahman assumes name and form. Every Buddha, it should however be noted, has his own Sambhogakāya but all Buddhas have one Dharmakāya. The *Laṅkāvatāra* also gives hints to this effect. It says that *abhāva* (absence of anything) is not Tathāgata, and again, as Tathāgata is described as 'Anutpāda-anirodha', it has some meaning. It then denotes the Manomaya-dharmakāya.<sup>4</sup> It cannot be seen by the non-Buddhists, Śrāvakas, Pratyekabuddhas and even Bodhisattvas in one of the first seven bhūmis. Just as different names of one thing or one person like hasta, kara, pāṇi, or Indra, Śakra, Purandara indicate

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Dīgha*, II, p. 93 : Dhammādāsa.

<sup>2</sup> Explained in detail in the *Sūtrā*, pp. 46ff; *Mvyut*. 5.

<sup>3</sup> *Pañca*. (A.S.B. ms.), leaf. 359a. Cf. *Sīkṣā*, p. 159; *Bodhic.*, pp. 1, 4; *Mtu.*, III, pp. 344, 452.

<sup>4</sup> For the definition of Manomayakāya and its three sub-divisions, see *Laṅkā*, p. 81; Suzuki, *E.B.*, iv, pp. 284-5.



different aspects of the same thing so also the different names of Śākyamuni Buddha in the Sahā lokadhātu, *e.g.*, Svāyambhuva, Nāyaka, Vṛṣabha, Viṣṇu, Īśvara, Pradhāna, Kapila, Soma, Bhāskara, Rāma, Vyāsa, or Śūnyatā, Tathatā Bhūtakoti, Nirvāṇa, Sarvajña, etc., indicate the different aspects of Śākyamuni Buddha.<sup>1</sup> People being subject to the conceptions of two extremes 'is' or 'is not' (dvayānta-patitayā) do not know that Buddha is like a reflection of the moon on water neither appearing nor disappearing. In this passage there is a clear hint that this Manomaya-dharmakāya, existing in the Sahā lokadhātu, is the same as the Svasambhogakāya of the *Siddhi* and the Āsecanaka-ātmabhāva or Prakṛtyātmabhāva of the *Prajñāpāramitās*, and it corresponds to the *Upaniṣadic* conception of Īśvara.

#### DHARMAKĀYA

The three kāyas, of which we have so far spoken, belong strictly, to the realm of Saṃvṛti, worldly and transcendental, and as such they were treated as Rūpa- or Nirmāṇa-kāya by the early Mahāyānists, including Nāgārjuna. The only real kāya of Buddha is the Reality as conceived by the Mahāyānists, and is not different from the things or beings of the universe.<sup>2</sup> Though an attempt to define it by the current words and expressions is bound to be not only incorrect but misleading, the Mahāyānic texts tried to give an idea of it as far as the language permitted. The *Kārikā* and the *Siddhi* call it Svābhāvika or Svabhāva kāya. It is, according to them, immeasurable and illimitable. It fills all space. It is the basis of the Sambhoga- and Nirmāṇa-kāyas. It is devoid of all marks (*i.e.* mahāpuruṣalakṣaṇas) and is inexpressible (niṣprapañca). It is possessed of eternal, real and unlimited guṇas. It has neither citta nor rūpa, and again it is not different from them. There is one and only one Dharmakāya. Buddhas may have their individual Sambhogakāyas but they have all one Dharmakāya.<sup>3</sup> It can only

<sup>1</sup> *Lankā.*, pp. 192-3; cf. *Daśa.*, p. 55.

<sup>2</sup> In a Buddhist inscription of Battambang, a stanza in salutation of Buddha brings out this idea. See *Le Muséon*, vol. VII.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *Vis. M.*, p. 508: Nirvāṇa is one for all Buddhas.



be realised within oneself and not described, for that would be like the attempt of the blind man to describe the sun, which he has never seen.<sup>1</sup>

It is often questioned whether the conception of Dharma-kāya can be traced in the *Prajñāpāramitās* and the works of Nāgārjuna, and whether the *Prajñāpāramitās* and the works of Nāgārjuna admit of such a reality, or rather preach pure and simple negativism? To put it in another way, was it the object of the *Prajñāpāramitās* and Nāgārjuna's works to point out only the incongruities of the world and worldly knowledge and avoid making any statement about the Reality or the truth?

The *Aṣṭasāhasrikā* and other *Prajñāpāramitās*, though unrelenting in their negation of every possible statement about the reality, never assert that Tathatā or Śūnyatā or Dharma-kāya in its real sense is also non-existing. The statements like 'tathatāvikārā nirvikārāvikalpā nirvikalpā' (Suchness is immutable, unchangeable, beyond percept and distinctions)<sup>2</sup> show rather a positive conception of the Reality than a purely negative one. In regard to the Dharmakāya also the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā* makes similar statements. It says that he who knows that the dharmas, existing in the world or preached by the Tathāgata, have no more existence than things in a dream and, does not enquire whence the Tathāgata comes and where he goes, realises the Tathāgata through Dharmatā.<sup>3</sup> The Buddhakāya, that people speak of, arises through cause and condition like the sound of a flute; it involves really no appearance or disappearance. Those

<sup>1</sup> Masuda, *op. cit.*, p. 59; Suzuki, *Awakening of Faith*, p. 62.

<sup>2</sup> *Aṣṭa.*, p. 307; cf. the passage: yā ca tathāgatatathatā yā ca sarvadharmatathatā ekaivaiṣā tathatā'dvayā'dvaidhīkā'rā'dvayatathatā na kvacit tathatā na kutaścīt tathatā na kasyacit tathatā yataḥ sā na kasyacit tathatā tataḥ sā tathatā'dvayā'dvaidhīkā'rā'dvayatathatā.

(That which is Tathāgata-tathatā and that which is all-things-tathatā are non-dual, one and the same, Tathatā is neither anywhere nor arises from anywhere, nor belongs to anything, hence as Tathatā does not belong to anybody, it is non-dual and one).

For other passages of similar import, see *M. Vṛ.*, Ch. xxii.

<sup>3</sup> *Aṣṭa.*, p. 514: te dharmatayā tathāgatam prajānāti. Cf. *M. Vṛ.*, p. 448: dharmato buddhā draṣṭavyāḥ.



who run after the form and voice of the Tathāgata and conceive of his appearance and disappearance are far from the Truth.<sup>1</sup> No further statements than this can be made about the Reality, for that would be again *prapañca*. When the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā* asserts that the Tathāgata does not exist, it refers to that Tathāgata as conceived by one on reading the Mahāyāna texts. Even the Bodhisattvas, unless and until they reach the tenth bhūmi, cannot extricate themselves from a conception of the Tathāgatakāya, however subtle it may be (e.g. the Svasambhogakāya). They are still under a delusion and it is this delusion that the *Prajñāpāramitās* endeavour to remove by asserting that there is no Tathāgata.

Nāgārjuna by denying the existence of a so-called Tathāgata does nothing more than what the *Prajñāpāramitās* endeavour to establish. His point is that, if *bhavasantati* (series of existence) be admitted then the existence of a Tathāgata should also be admitted,<sup>2</sup> for the Tathāgata represents the ultimate state of this *bhavasantati*; it is a state attained by a being after a long series of existence. As in reality (*paramārthataḥ*) there is no *bhavasantati*, there is also no Tathāgata—that being who is supposed to have become Tathāgata after practising mahākaruṇā and other virtues, and thereby attaining omniscience. If the Tathāgata had really existed, he would either be the same as five skandhas or different from them, or the skandhas would be in him or he in the skandhas, but as he is none of these nor any one of these is he, he cannot have any real existence. By these and other similar arguments Nāgārjuna asserts that there is no Tathāgata. By such denial he only establishes that the Tathāgata as the ultimate state of *bhavasantati* does not exist.

Candrakīrti, in support of Nāgārjuna's arguments, quotes a passage from the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā* (p. 479), in which Buddha and his dharma are compared to *māyā* or *svapna*, but at the same time he says "we do not assert the non-existence

<sup>1</sup> *Aṣṭa.*, p. 513.

<sup>2</sup> *M. Vr.*, p. 431: *vidyata eva bhavasantatis tathāgatasadbhāvāt*; *Ibid.*, p. 432. *Na hy ekena janmanā śakyam tathāgatatvam anuprāptum.*



(*nāstitva*) of the Tathāgata in every way, for then we would be guilty of *apavāda* (denial), and yet being desirous of describing the Tathāgata by means of *vyavahāra-satya* (conventionally) and by taking recourse to super-impositions (*samāropa*) we say that he is *śūnya* or *aśūnya*, or *śūnyā-śūnya* or *naiva śūnya nāśūnya*. But he who endeavours to realise the true Tathāgata by having recourse to statements and denials will never know him. Candrakīrti in support of this quotes the verses from the *Vajracchedikā*, to which the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā* also refers, *viz.*, “he who endeavoured to see me through my form and voice could not see me because

dharmato buddhā draṣṭavyā dharmakāyā hi nāyakāḥ,  
dharmatā cāpy aviññeyā na sā śakyā viññitum.

[A buddha is to be seen in the sense of *dharmatā* (nature of dharmas), for the leaders (of men) have only *Dharmakāya*. That *dharmatā* is unknowable (so also is the Tathāgata)].<sup>1</sup>

Nāgārjuna concludes his examination of the Tathāgata-kāya by identifying Tathāgata with the world (*jagat*),<sup>2</sup> or nature itself, and asserting that the Tathāgata, whom people or even Bodhisattvas have in view, is only a *bimba* (image) of *kuśaladharmas* and is not the real Tathatā or Tathāgata.<sup>3</sup> A dialectician like Nāgārjuna cannot go further than this to establish the Reality. It is by denial of the existence of unreal things, including the so-called Tathāgata, that he points towards the Reality—the real Tathāgatakāya, the *Dharmakāya*.<sup>4</sup>

The conception of *Dharmakāya* was of special interest to the Yogācārins. The *Laṅkāvatāra*<sup>5</sup> in describing it says that

<sup>1</sup> *M. Vr.*, p. 448; cf. *Aṣṭa.*, pp. 513, 514; *Vajra.*, p. 43.

<sup>2</sup> Tathāgato yatsvabhāvas tat svabhāvam idaṃ jagat,  
Tathāgato niḥsvabhāvo niḥsvabhāvam idaṃ jagat.

*M. Vr.*, pp. 448-9

<sup>3</sup> *M. Vr.*, pp. 448-9.

<sup>4</sup> Prapañcayanti ye buddham prapañcātītam avyayaṃ,  
Te prapañcahatāḥ sarve na paśyanti Tathāgatam.  
See also *M. Vr.*, p. 534.

<sup>5</sup> *Laṅkā.*, pp. 57, 60.



(Dharmatā) Buddha is without any substratum (nirālamba) and lies beyond the range of functioning organs of sense, proofs or signs and hence beyond the vision of Śrāvakas, Pratyekabuddhas or the non-Mahāyānists. It is to be realised only within one's own self. The *Sūtrālaṅkāra*<sup>1</sup> calls it Svabhāvika-dharmakāya. It is one and the same kāya in all Buddhas, very subtle, unknowable and eternal. The *Triṃśikā*<sup>2</sup> explains the Dharmakāya as the transformed āśraya (substratum)—the ālayaviññāna—the transformation being effected by knowledge (jñāna) and the suppression of the two evils (dauṣṭhulyas), viz., kleśāvaraṇa and jñeyāvaraṇa. The *Āloka*<sup>3</sup> on the *Abhisamayālaṅkārikā* also explains the Dharmakāya in a similar way. According to it, there are two kinds of Dharmakāya, one being the Bodhipakṣika and other dharma, which are themselves pure and productive of clear knowledge (niṣprapañcajñānātmakā) and the other the transformed āśraya of the same, which is then called Svabhāvika-dharmakāya. Professor Stcherbatsky<sup>4</sup> supplies us with nearly the same information that we find in the *Āloka* from some source, which he does not mention. He says that “according to the early Yogācāras the Dharmakāya is divided into Svabhāvika-dharmakāya (ñō-bo-ñid-sku) and jñānakāya (ye-śes-kyi-sku); the first is the motionless (nitya) substance of the universe, the second is anitya, i.e., changing, living”. Evidently what the Professor means by Jñānakāya is the Dharmakāya, consisting of the Bodhipakṣika and other dharma, of the *Āloka*. That the Svabhāvika-dharmakāya is the nityakāya, as pointed out by him, is also supported by the *Suvarṇaprabhāsa* and other texts.<sup>5</sup>

The Chinese commentators on the *Siddhi* say that Dharmakāya is the metaphysical principle of real *citta* and *rūpa* of the Tathāgata. It is the real nature of things, and can be equated with Tathatā, Dharmadhātu or Tathāgatagarbha.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Sūtrā.*, p. 45.

<sup>2</sup> *Triṃśikā*, p. 44.

<sup>3</sup> *J.A.*, 1913.

<sup>4</sup> *Con. of N.*, p. 185n.

<sup>5</sup> *Suvarṇaprabhāsa* (B.T.S.), p. 8; *Laṅkā.*, p. 78; *Sūtrā.*, p. 46.

<sup>6</sup> I have derived this information from Professor La Vallée Poussin. In *Laṅkā.* (pp. 77, 78) the Tathāgatagarbha is described as nitya, dhruva, śāśvata, śiva, etc., just as the non-Buddhists speak of their great soul as nitya, kartā, nirguṇa, vibhu, and avyaya.



The goal of Bodhisattvas is to realise the Dharmakāya. Every being has the Dharmakāya, or the Dharmakāya comprises all beings of the world, but as they are blinded by avidyā do not realise this fact. What the Bodhisattva aims at is the removal of this avidyā and the realisation of the fact that he is the same as the Dharmakāya. The *Āloka* on the *Kārikā*<sup>1</sup> enumerates the steps through which a Bodhisattva passes, and points out that the last step of a Bodhisattva is to realise the Dharmakāya (dharmakāyābhisambodhena bhaviṣyati), after which it becomes easy for him to assume any one of the four kāyas. In the *Laṅkāvatāra* we notice that Mahāmāti is anxious to know how a Bodhisattva after completing the ten bhūmis can attain the Tathāgatakāya or Dharmakāya and go to any one of the Buddhakṣetras or heavens. The *Laṅkāvatāra* also describes in rosy colours the prospect of attaining Dharmakāya. It says that a Bodhisattva after attaining the Mahādharma-megha in the ninth bhūmi is adorned with many jewels, and sits on a lotus in a jewelled palace surrounded by other Bodhisattvas of his status. He comprehends there the illusory nature of all things. He is anointed (abhiṣeka) by Vajrapāṇi as a son of Buddha. He then goes beyond the bhūmi of Buddhasutas by realising within himself the dharmanairātmya and confronts the Dharmakāya.<sup>2</sup> The *Triṃśikā* says that just as Vimuktikāya is the goal of the arhats, so Dharmakāya is the goal of the Bodhisattvas. It shows that as the arhats by getting rid of kleśāvaraṇa obtain a purified kāya, so also a Buddha by getting rid of both kleśāvaraṇa and jñeyāvaraṇa obtains the Dharmakāya.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> J.A., 1913.

<sup>2</sup> *Laṅkā.*, pp. 51, 70.

<sup>3</sup> *Triṃśikā*, p. 44.



## (c). The Doctrine of Nirvāṇa

### SECTION I

The second fundamental point of difference between the doctrines of Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna, mentioned in the *Saddharma-Puṇḍarīka*, lies in the conception of Nirvāṇa.

#### HĪNĀYĀNIC NIRVĀṆA : (I) LIBERATION FROM DUḤKHATĀ

The Hīnayānist considers himself afflicted with three kinds of misery (duḥkha), viz., (a) suffering due to mental and physical causes (*duḥkha-duḥkhata*), (b) that inhering in caused and conditioned existences (*saṃskāra-duḥkhata*) subject as they are to origin and destruction, and (c) that due to transformation of pleasurable sensations into painful ones e.g. (*vipariṇāma-duḥkhata*)<sup>1</sup>. He seeks release from these miseries incidental to life in any of the three worlds, Kāma, Rūpa, and Arūpa<sup>2</sup> (including the six ordinary forms of existence<sup>3</sup>) by realising the formula of the law of causation (*pratityasamutpāda*) and the four āryasatyas, and the transitoriness (*anityatā*) and essencelessness (*anātmatā*) of the things of this world and the miseries to which they lead. The *Puṇḍarīka* concedes that many of the disciples of Buddha attained Arhatship or Nirvāṇa by perceiving the non-existence of anything corresponding to soul (*ātmā*) in any of the five categories of mental and physical elements (*skandhas*)<sup>4</sup>. The Hīnayānists admit that their Nirvāṇa consists in a liberation from the three kinds of

<sup>1</sup> *Sad. P.*, p. 109; *M. Vr.*, p. 475; *Mvyut.* 3; *Kośa*, vi, 3; Poussin, *Nirvāṇa*, p. 174; Burnouf, *Lotus etc.*, p. 68; *Dīgha*, III, p. 216; *Saṃyutta*, IV, p. 259, V, p. 56. In the *Vibhaṅga-Aṭṭhakathā* (pp. 93-94) seven kinds of *dukkhas* are mentioned: *dukkha-dukkham*, *vipariṇāmad.*, *saṅkhārad.*, *paṭicchannad.*, *appaṭicchannad.*, *pariyāyad.*, and *nippariyāyad.*

<sup>2</sup> *Sad. P.*, pp. 100, 117, 132-3, *Samādhirāja* (B.T.S. ed.), p. 13; *Sūtrā.*, pp. 94, 128.

<sup>3</sup> *Sad. P.*, pp. 135-6; for the six gatis, see *Dīgha*, III, p. 264; *J.P.T.S.*, 1884, p. 152; *Annales du Musée Guimet*, V, pp. 514-528; *E.R.E.*, sv. *Cosmogony and Cosmology*.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *Paṭis. M.*, I, p. 146.



*duḥkhatā*, incidental to existence in the three *laukikadhatus*. Thus, according to the Hīnayānic conception, beings obtain liberation by attaining *nibbānadhātu* without any residue<sup>1</sup>. The Pāli works, canonical or post-canonical, agree on the point that this release is obtained by realising *anityatā*, *duḥkhatā* and *anātmata* as well as *pratityasamutpannatā* of the world.

What the Mahāyānists endeavour to point out is that the Hīnayānists concern themselves with the realisation of the non-existence of a permanent entity like soul (*Pudgala-nairātmya*) and not of the non-existence of anything whatsoever supposed to exist (*Dharma-nairātmya*).<sup>2</sup> According to the Mahāyānists, this realisation attained by the Hīnayānists cannot lead them to the ultimate Reality; it carries them only some distance towards the Truth, and hence Nirvāṇa in the real sense of the term cannot be said to be attained by them<sup>3</sup>. The Hīnayānists, however, consider that they reach Nirvāṇa when they know that they will have no more birth as they have led the life of holiness (*brahmacarya*) and realised the *pudgala-nairātmya*. Some think, as the *Laṅkāvatāra*<sup>4</sup> puts it, that Nirvāṇa is attained by comprehending what is really soul or personality; some others think that it is attained by penetrating into the truth that things are dependent on causes. But in fact, the *Laṅkāvatāra*<sup>5</sup> adds, there is no real emancipation (*mokṣa*) without the realisation of *Dharma-nairātmya*. So the Hīnayānists do not actually reach *mokṣa*; they are only tossed up and down by the properties (*lakṣaṇa*) of things like a log of wood by the waves.

#### (II) PASSAGE FROM NIMITTA TO ANIMITTA

The Hīnayānists, according to the *Sūtrālaṅkāra*<sup>6</sup>, have only personality as their basis (*pudgala-nimitta*) for medita-

<sup>1</sup> *DhP.*, 26: *saṅkhāradukkhatāya loko anupādisesāya nibbānadhātuyā muñcati*.

<sup>2</sup> *Sūtrā.*, pp. 154–160; *Laṅkā.*, pp. 68–69.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *Bodhic.*, p. 442: without the realisation of *Sūnyatā*, there may be *nivṛti* (quietude) but it is not permanent.

<sup>4</sup> *Laṅkā.*, pp. 63–4.

<sup>5</sup> *Laṅkā.*, p. 135.

<sup>6</sup> *Sūtrā.*, pp. 140.



tion, and so they reach only Śrāvaka-bodhi or Pratyeka-bodhi and not Samyak-sambodhi, which can only be attained by making all *dharma*s (existent things and conditions) the basis (*nimitta*) for meditations<sup>1</sup>. The Śrāvakas distinguish between a thing with signs (*nimitta*) and a thing without signs (*animitta*) and try to draw away their minds from all *nimittas* and apply them to the attainment of the *animitta* which they attain in due course. The Mahāyānists think that the dual conception of things cannot lead to mokṣa. They do not know of anything other than *Tathatā* (thatness of things); so to them a *nimitta* is equally an *animitta*, and consequently their knowledge, derived as it is on the basis of *Tathatā* alone, is free from all differentiations or dualism (*dvaya-grāha-vivarjita*).<sup>2</sup> By the remark that the Hīnayānists distinguish between *Nimitta* and *Animitta* and consider that a person attains *Animitta* (= Nibbāna) by cogitating on the *Animitta*-dhātu and dissociating his mind from all things with signs, the *Sūtrā-lankāra*<sup>3</sup> refers in a general way to the practice of the Hīnayānists to avoid *rāga*, *dosa*, *moha* and such other *nimittas*<sup>4</sup> by which a being becomes entangled in worldly things. There are in the Nikāyas many passages of this import, e.g., in the *Dīgha* and *Āṅguttara Nikāyas*<sup>5</sup> it is said that a person by inattention to all signs (of allurements) develops such a mental concentration that it may be described as *animitta* (without sign). But the prevalent meaning of *Animitta* in Pāli works is Nibbāna, the goal to be reached through the meditations

<sup>1</sup> *Sūtrā.*, pp. 169–170.

<sup>2</sup> For the exposition of *Dharma-tattva* as *satatam dvayena rahitam*, see *Ibid.*, pp. 58 ff.

<sup>3</sup> *Sūtrā.*, p. 169: *Sarvanimittānām amanasikārād animittasya ca dhātor manasikārād animittam samāpadyante* (as done by the Śrāvakas and not by Bodhisattvas).

<sup>4</sup> *Mahāniddeśa*, I, p. 198: *Rūpanimitta, saddan., gandhan., rasān., phoṭṭhabban., and dhamman.*

<sup>5</sup> *Āṅguttara*, III, pp. 292, 397; *Dīgha*, II, 100: *Yasmim samaye tathāgato sabbanimittānam amanasikārā ekaccānam vedanānam nirodhe animittam cetosamādhim upasampajja viharati*; *Paṭis. M.*, I, p. 91: *Nimittam bhayato sampassamāno animitte adhimuttattā pavattam ajjhupekkhitvā nirodham nibbānam animittam āvajjitvā samāpajjitvā* etc.; see also *Vis. M.*, p. 672; *Mahāniddeśa*, I, p. 198.



(samādhis or vimokkhas) called suññata, appanīhita and animitta. These vimokkhas help the adept to comprehend that the things of the world are essenceless (anatta), unpleasant (dukkha) and impermanent (anicca)<sup>1</sup>. The *Anguttara Nikāya*<sup>2</sup> hints that a person puts an end to his āsavas (impurities) by dwelling on these three nimittas while the *Atthasālinī*<sup>3</sup> states that the five khandhas appear as frightful to a man as a dead body hung round his neck, if he understands the three lak-khaṇas (anicca, dukkha and anatta).

### (III) REMOVAL OF KLEŚĀVARAṆA AND NOT JÑEYĀVARAṆA

The *Laṅkāvatāra*<sup>4</sup> while explaining the position of the Hīnayānists says that they believe in the reality of saṃsāra (worldly existence) and are frightened by its attendant miseries from which they seek release; this is only due to their ignorance of the non-existence of any difference between saṃsāra and nirvāṇa. The standpoint of the Hīnayānists is that the world or things around us are produced out of the five skandhas or seventy-two elements having real existence. The constituted things which originate through some causes and conditions (pratītyasamutpanna) are in a constant state of flux and devoid of any substance.<sup>5</sup> The mental and physical constituents undergo momentary (kṣaṇika) changes and there is no permanent entity apart from them. It is by the removal of the notion of the existence of an ātman as identical with one of the skandhas or something apart from them that a person attains Nirvāṇa.

<sup>1</sup> These three are called also lak-khaṇas (properties of worldly things). Cf. *Jāt.*, I, p. 48 : Buddhānañ ca dhammadesanā tilakkhaṇamuttā nāma natthi, tesam aniccadukkhamanattā ti . . .

<sup>2</sup> *Anguttara*, III, p. 319.

<sup>3</sup> *Attha.*, p. 225.

<sup>4</sup> *Laṅkā.*, p. 61.

<sup>5</sup> *Paṭis. M.*, II, p. 177 devotes a chapter to the exposition of *Suñña*. The general definition offered by it is that the things of the world are devoid of attā or attaniya. Then it says that the *Suñña* can be explained in 24 ways, viz., suññasuññam, saṅkhārasuññam, vipariṇāmasuññam, etc., up to paramatthasuññam (=Nibbāna). The various suññas may well be compared to the 18 kinds of the Śūnyatās of the Mahāyāna scriptures.



The Mahāyānists do not admit the real existence of the skandhas or elements composing a being. They assert that the skandhas exist only in imagination (*vikalpa*) or are illusory conceptions (*māyā*) held by the so-called beings suffering from a defective vision due to ignorance. So the Truth, according to the Mahāyānists, is *Śūnyatā* or *Dharma-nairātmya*. The *Puṇḍarīka*<sup>1</sup> therefore says that he who knows the dharmas as devoid of *ātman* knows the truth. It is because one does not possess this knowledge of the essencelessness of dharmas (*śūnyajñāna-vihīnatvāt*) that one is called a Śrāvaka. The *Kāśyapa Parivarta* sarcastically compares the Pudgala-*śūnyatā* of the Śrāvakas with the hole made by a termite, and the Dharmaśūnyatā of the Bodhisattvas with the infinite space (*ākāśa*).<sup>2</sup> Of the seven reasons adduced by the *Sūtrālaṅkāra* to show why Mahāyāna should be considered superior to Hinayāna, one is that the knowledge of the Mahāyānists is on a higher level, for it penetrates both Pudgala-nairātmya and Dharma-nairātmya.<sup>3</sup> The *Triṃśikā*<sup>4</sup> brings out very clearly the difference between Pudgala- and Dharma-nairātmya. It says that the realisation of the two forms of Nairātmya is needed for the removal of the two screens (*āvaraṇa*) viz., that of passions (*kleśa*) and that hindering true knowledge (*jñeya*). The passions of desire, attachment, etc. arise on account of a belief in a self; so when one realises the non-existence of self, his egoism is destroyed, and as a result his passions are eliminated. The realisation of the non-existence of the things of this world (dharma-nairātmya) removes the screen over true knowledge. The removal of both the screens is needed for the attainment of emancipation (*mokṣa*) and omniscience (*sarvajñatva*). The passions are obstacles to the attainment of emancipation (*mokṣaprāpterāvaraṇam*); hence the removal of passions leads to mokṣa. The screen of *jñeya* works as a hindrance to the functioning of knowledge (*jñāna*), i.e., in the apperception of things through knowledge. When it is removed knowledge penetrates unhindered into all objects of knowledge in detail

<sup>1</sup> *Saḍ. P.*, p. 138; *Kāś. P.*, pp. 115f.

<sup>2</sup> *Kāś. P.*, 114, *Pañca.*, leaves 77, 78.

<sup>3</sup> *Sūtrā.*, p. 171.

<sup>4</sup> *Siddhi*, p. 15; cf. *Sūtrā.*, p. 94.



(*sarvākāra*) without, however, causing attachment of any kind and this is called the attainment of omniscience or Bodhi.

The Hīnayānists, however, do not admit that they shake off only the *klesāvaraṇa* and not *jñeyāvaraṇa* as stated by the Mahāyānists. They contend that by the removal of the screen of actions (*karmāvaraṇa*), of the effects of karma (*vipākāvaraṇa*) and of afflictions (*kilesāvaraṇa*),<sup>1</sup> the Arhats attain full knowledge without any veil (*anāvaraṇa*).<sup>2</sup> They completely eradicate from their minds the *āsavas* including the *avijñāsa*. Of the three branches of their spiritual culture, *viz.*, *sīla*, *samādhi* and *paññā*, the last, according to them, brings home to an Arhat the Truth,<sup>3</sup> which is the same for Arhats and Buddhas. The function of *Paññā* consists in destroying *Avijjā*, the veil of ignorance, the source of worldly existences, and therefore, of all miseries (*dukkha*). It is *Avijjā*, which (i) causes experience of things which ought not to be experienced, *e.g.*, evils through thoughts, words and deeds; (ii) veils things which ought to be known, *e.g.*, the merit of observance of good conduct and so forth; (iii) acts as a hindrance to the realisation of the fact that the five *khandhas* are in reality an undifferentiated heap (*rāsaṭṭham*), and that the perceptions of the organs of sense are essenceless and that the truths are the same *tathatṭham*; <sup>4</sup> (iv) drives (*javāpeti*) beings into the various forms of existence in the *Kāma*, *Rūpa*, and *Arūpa* worlds without cessation; (v) causes one to discriminate between things which in the ultimate analysis have no real difference and clouds one's vision from the real nature of the *khandhas*; and (vi) blinds one to the relative nature of the

<sup>1</sup> The Mahāyānists perhaps made capital out of the statements very often found in the Hīnayāna works like "Arahattamaggena sabba-kilesehi vimuccatīti". *Paṭis. M.*, II, p. 243.

<sup>2</sup> *Paṭis. M.*, I, pp. 124, 131.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, II, pp. 31, 244: arhattamaggena sabbakilese samvaratṭhena silavisuddhi, avikkepatṭhena cittavisuddhi, dassanatṭhena ditṭhivisuddhi.

<sup>4</sup> *Paṭis. M.*, p. 104 explains *tathatṭham* thus: Cattāro dukkhassa dukkhatṭhā tathā avitathā anaññathā; dukkhassa pīlanatṭho sankhatatṭho santāpatṭho vipariṇāmatṭho...Evam dukkham tathatṭhena saccam. In this way the other truths are also explained.



world, i.e., its dependence on causes and conditions (paṭi-casamuppana).<sup>1</sup> By the complete removal of this Avijjā through paññā, a person becomes Arhat and reaches the state which is beyond change, beyond destruction—the state of immortality. There can be no state higher than this. The Hīnayānists acknowledge that the Buddhas by their extraordinary merits accumulated in the past acquire omniscience (sabbaññutañāṇa)<sup>2</sup> and many other powers unattainable by Arhats,<sup>3</sup> but they do not admit that the Nibbāna of Buddha is different from that of an Arhat. The knowledge (ñāṇa) acquired by Arhats and Buddhas is *anāvaraṇa* (without any veil) with this difference in the case of a Buddha that his knowledge is detailed and superior in some respects to that of the Arhats.<sup>4</sup>

#### (IV) TRANSITION FROM LAUKIKA TO LOKOTTARA

It is stated in the *Puṇḍarīka* that the Hīnayānists conceive of Nirvāṇa as passing from the worldly (*laukikadhātu*) to the transcendental sphere (*lokottaradhātu*), i.e., the Hīnayānic Nirvāṇa is a transcendental state beyond the three dhātus free from every kind of affliction and beyond any possibility of retrogression to lower stages. The *Laṅkāvatāra*<sup>5</sup> points out that ordinary knowledge (*laukikañāṇa*) of the people of the world has reference to the existence and non-existence of things (*sad asat pakṣābhiniṣṭa*) while the transcendental knowledge (*lokottarañāṇa*) possessed by the Śrāvakas and Pratyekabuddhas has reference to the particular and generic characteristics of things (*svasāmānyalakṣaṇa-patitāśayābhiniṣṭa*)<sup>6</sup> penetrating through the notion of existence and non-existence of things. The distinction between *laukika* and *lokottara* as drawn in the *Puṇḍarīka* and

<sup>1</sup> *Vis. M.*, p. 526.

<sup>2</sup> *Kvu.*, xxi, 3; i. 2.

<sup>3</sup> For a comparison of the powers (*bala*) of Arhats and Buddhas, see *Paṭis. M.*, II, pp. 173 ff.

<sup>4</sup> *Paṭis. M.*, I, pp. 131 ff; II, pp. 31, 32. The Buddhas possess 14 ñāṇas, of which eight are common to the Arhats and Buddhas.

<sup>5</sup> *Laṅkā.*, p. 157.

<sup>6</sup> *Kośa*, VI, 14c.d.: *svalakṣaṇa*=le caractère propre; *sāmānyalakṣaṇa*=les caractères généraux.



*Laṅkāvatāra* finds support in the Hīnayāna scriptures. There it is stated that the puthujjanas (non-sotāpannas) labour under the notion of individual existence in the worlds while the arhats are free from such notion, as they know that all beings are made of five skandhas devoid of an underlying permanent entity and owing their origin to causes and conditions (pratītyasamutpanna), and that the common characteristics of beings are anityatā, duḥkhatā and anātmatā.

The *Paṭisambhidāmagga*, *Vibhaṅga* and other works speak of four dhātus, viz., Kāma, Rūpa, Arūpa and Apariyāpanna or Lokuttara.<sup>1</sup> *Kāmadhātu* is the world of beings having vatthukāma (desire for existence in any of the three worlds) and kilesakāma (proneness to passion). It comprises the eleven spheres of existence from the Avīci hell to the Paranimmita heaven.<sup>2</sup> In *Kāmadhātu*, the beings possess 5 khandhas, 12 āyatanas, 18 dhātus, 32 indriyas, 9 hetus, 7 kinds of phassa, vedanā, saññā, cetanā and citta, are conversant with the 3 truths and dependent on 4 āhāras.<sup>3</sup> *Rūpadhātu* is the world of beings without kāma (passion), their actions being subtle (sukhuma)<sup>4</sup> in contrast to those of *kāmadhātu* whose actions are olārika (gross). It comprises sixteen planes of existence from Brahmaloка to Akaniṭṭha heaven.<sup>5</sup> In this dhātu, the beings possess 5 khandhas, 6 āyatanas, 9 dhātus, 14 indriyas, 8 hetus, and 4 kinds of phassa, vedanā, saññā, cetanā and citta, are conversant with 3 truths and dependent on 3 āhāras. *Arūpa-*

<sup>1</sup> *Vis. M.*, p. 493; *Paṭis. M.*, I, p. 83.

<sup>2</sup> *Attha.*, pp. 61-2; *Paṭis. M.*, I, p. 83. The eleven spheres are the six Devalokas, Manussaloka, Petaloka, Tiracchānayoṇi and Niraya.

<sup>3</sup> *Vibh.*, p. 404.

<sup>4</sup> *Vis. M.*, p. 475.

<sup>5</sup> These are called *Rūpabrahmalokas*. By practising the first jhāna an adept develops a state of mind which is similar to that of the denizens of the first three *Rūpabrahmalokas*. Should the adept die after perfecting himself in this jhāna, it is believed that he will be reborn in one of those three lokas, which are therefore called *Paṭhamajjhānabhūmi*. Applying the same reason, the second three *Rūpabrahmalokas* are called *Dutiyajjhānabhūmi*, third three *Tatiyajjhānabhūmi*, the tenth and eleventh *Catutthajjhānabhūmi*, and the remaining five *Suddhāvāsabhūmi*.



*dhātu* is the world of beings without *kāma* (passion) and *rūpa* (material constituents of a body). It contains the gods residing in the four spheres from the *ākāsānañcāyatana* to *nevasaññā-nāsaññāyatana*.<sup>1</sup> In this *dhātu* the beings possess 4 *khandhas*, 2 *āyatanas*, 2 *dhātus*, 11 *indriyas*, 8 *hetus*, one kind of *phassa*, *vedanā*, *saññā*, *cetanā* and *citta*, are conversant with 3 truths and dependent on 3 *āhāras*.

These three *dhātus* contain all the beings of the universe from the lowest to the highest plane of existence. The aim of Hīnayāna Buddhism is to reach a plane beyond the three *dhātus*, called the *Apariyāpanna-* or *Lokuttara-dhātu* (the unincluded or transcendental sphere. According to the *Paṭisambhidāmagga*<sup>2</sup> it contains those beings who have reached the four *maggas* and have obtained the four *maggaphalas* or the *Asaṅkhata*, i.e., *Nibbāna*. The *Vibhaṅga*<sup>3</sup> explains that the beings of *Apariyāpannadhātu* possess *khandhas* and *āyatanas* similar to those of *Arūpadhātu* with the difference that the former are conversant with two truths (*nirodha* and *magga*), possess one additional power, viz., *anaññātāññassāmīti* *indriya* and 6 *hetus*.<sup>4</sup> Evidently, the texts have in view those sentient beings of the first three *dhātus*, who come to possess one of the stages of sanctification including Arhathood. The texts, however, do not explain how a being belonging to the *Kāma-* or *Rūpa-dhātu* and possessing one of the stages of sanctification can be without the *rūpakkhanda* and how one possessed of the *Asaṅkhata* or *Nibbāna* can continue to have the *khandhas*, *dhātus*, *āyatanas*, etc.,<sup>5</sup> which are the attributes of the members of *Apariyāpanna-* and *Arūpa-dhātus*. Thus we find that the Hīnayānists seek release from the three *laukikadhātus* by attaining the *lokottara-* or *apariyāpanna-dhātu*, which includes the *Asaṅkhata-* or *Nibbāna-dhātu*.

<sup>1</sup> These four are called *Arūpabrahmalokas*. The adepts, as above, by practising the *Ākāsānañcāyatana* and other *jhānas* rise to the same level as the gods of the *Ākāsānanta* and other *āyatanas*.

<sup>2</sup> *Paṭis. M.*, I, p. 84.

<sup>3</sup> *Vibh.*, p. 407.

<sup>4</sup> *Buddhaghosa* points out that in reality one cannot speak of *lokuttarāni viññāṇāni*.

<sup>5</sup> *Vis. M.*, p. 545.



## NIRVĀṆA ACCORDING TO THE EARLY MAHĀYĀNA WORKS

The Hīnayānic Nirvāṇa thus according to the *Puṇḍarīka*<sup>1</sup> is a haven of peace and rest and is a vimukti (emancipation) so far as the kleśas<sup>2</sup> (afflictions) are concerned. It further says that there may be people who may look upon this form of existence as Nirvāṇa and regard the Hīnayānists as right in their ways of thinking and practising. In order to counteract such a supposition it states that there is one and only one Nirvāṇa, not two or three, and that one is and can be attained only by a thorough comprehension of the sameness of all things (*sarvadharmā-samatāvabodhāt*)<sup>3</sup>. The conception of *Samatā* (sameness) has been developed in the *Sūtrālaṅkāra*, which gives five meanings of same. It says that a being after comprehending *Dharmasamatā* (sameness of things) and realising the non-substantiality of things (*dharmanairātmya*) sees that in the series of existences whether of himself or of others, there is no difference as regards *nairātmya* (essencelessness) and *duḥkha* (misery); that the desire for the removal of misery from himself as well as from others is the same; that the remedy applicable is the same for himself as well as for others; and that the knowledge attained by the bodhisattvas is the same as that attained by him<sup>4</sup>. The *Laṅkāvatāra*<sup>5</sup> explains *samatā* (sameness) by saying that it is the sameness of the world (*saṃsāra*) and its cessation (*nirvāṇa*), i.e., *saṃsāra* bears to *nirvāṇa* the same relation as waves bear to water. The *Pañcaviṃśati*<sup>6</sup> explains *samatā* by the illustration of *Ākāśa* (space). It

<sup>1</sup> *Sad. P.*, pp. 129, 136-7.

<sup>2</sup> *Sūtrā.*, p. 119; *M. Vr.*, p. 519: Tatra niravaśeṣasyāvidyārāgādikasya kleśagaṇasya prahāṇāt sopadhiśeṣaṃ nirvāṇam iṣyate.

<sup>3</sup> *Sad. P.*, p. 133; see p. 143:

sarvadharmāḥ samāḥ sarve samāḥ samasamāḥ sadā,  
Evam jñātvā vijānāti nirvāṇam amṛtaṃ śivaṃ.

<sup>4</sup> *Sūtrā.*, p. 94; see p. 48: samacittatā sarvasattesv ātmapara-samatayā.

<sup>5</sup> *Laṅkā.*, p. 42: saṃsāra-nirvāṇa-samatā; *M. Vr.*, ch. xxv: na nirvāṇasya saṃsārāt kiñcid asti viśeṣaṇaṃ. For an exposition of *saṃsāra* and *Nirvāṇa* as one, see Suzuki's *Outlines of Mahāyāna Buddhism*, pp. 352-6; Y. Sogen's *System etc.*, pp. 40-1.

<sup>6</sup> *Pañca.* (A.S.B. ms.), leaves 114 ff; *Sata.*, pp. 1560 ff.



says that Ākāśa has no direction like east or west, no past, present or future, no increase or decrease, no contamination or purification. It has no origin, continuity or decay. It cannot be a subject of thought. It can neither be heard nor seen; it is neither known nor unknown. It has nothing to do with the Kāma, Rūpa or Arūpa dhātus, with attachment or non-attachment, with hatred or non-hatred and so forth. It has no concern with the various *cittotpādas* (i.e., the development of citta for attainment of bodhi), *bhūmis* (stages of spiritual progress), *phalas* (fruits of spiritual sanctification), or any conceptions like happiness (*sukha*), misery (*duḥkha*), quietude (*śānta*), excellence (*pañīta*), etc. This is what is called the samatā (sameness) of Ākāśa. It is in this light that the things of the world are to be seen. What the *Pañcaviṃśati* contends for is that, from the standpoint of reality, the things seen, heard or known by us are, in fact, the outcome of our imagination. What we should do is to regard these things as our fancies, because they are really the same as Tathatā, of which nothing can be predicated, just as nothing can be predicated of Ākāśa.

According to the *Puṇḍarīka*, the real Nirvāṇa is that state in which one sees things without any differentiation or dichotomy, and for the description of which all the expressions that can be used by man, relative as they are, are inadequate. The *Laṅkāvatāra*<sup>1</sup> describes the jñāna of Bodhisattvas as the *lokottaratama-jñāna* (super-transcendental knowledge), as distinguished from the *lokottarajñāna* of the Śrāvakas and Pratyekabuddhas and *laukika-jñāna* of prthagjana (common persons). It consists in the realisation of all dharmas as mere reflections, having no origin and decay. Hence, no question of existence and non-existence can arise in regard to this (*virābhāsadharmapracayād anirodhānutpada-darśanāt sad asat pakṣavigatam*).

The Mahāyānists, however, concede the point that the Arhats can remain at peace in the state called by the Hīnayānists Arahathood or Nirvāṇa but, according to them,

<sup>1</sup> *Laṅkā.*, p. 157.



it is a lower ideal, a selfish end, devoid of love (*sneha*)<sup>1</sup> and charity. The *Puṇḍarīka*<sup>2</sup> states that the arhats after attaining (Hīnayānic) Nirvāṇa do not, in fact, wish to stay there for ever; it is only a temporary rest (*viśrāmo'yam na nivṛtiḥ*)<sup>3</sup>. At this stage, they become capable of realising the nature of the Truth and the powers and privileges appertaining to a Buddha, who is indistinguishable from that Truth. Then they set themselves to the performance of the duties still remaining, and ultimately become Buddhas, i.e., attain Nirvāṇa properly so called. They now realise that the three dhātus, from which they have so long struggled to extricate themselves, had no existence whatsoever,<sup>4</sup> and were merely imaginary superimpositions (*parikalpanā*).<sup>5</sup> The three dhātus that are seen in the ten directions are only appearances like a mirage; hence they cannot have origination, destruction or transformation, bondage or freedom, light or darkness. As they are non-existent like things in a dream or a mirage, any statement about them would be inappropriate. Unless one realises the things of this universe in this way, he cannot obtain Nirvāṇa (*sarvadharmā na prāptāḥ kutas tasya nirvāṇam iti*).<sup>6</sup> One who has developed

<sup>1</sup> *Sūtrā.*, pp. 126-7: *Niḥsnehānām śrāvaka-pratyekabuddhānām sarvaduḥkhopasāme nirvāṇe pratiṣṭhitam manah.*

<sup>2</sup> *Sad. P.*, pp. 132-3, 138, 140; cf. *Pañca.* (A.S.B. ms.), leaf 70b.

<sup>3</sup> *Sad. P.*, pp. 142, 188. Cf. 5 kinds of Nirvāṇa in the Brahma-jāla Sutta. Dr. E. J. Thomas in his *Life of Buddha*,<sup>6</sup> 200 refers to it thus, "They hold that Nirvāṇa consists in the *ān*joyment of this life in five ways, either in the pleasures of sense or one of the four trances".

<sup>4</sup> *Sad. P.*, p. 318.

<sup>5</sup> *Sūtrā.*, p. 94; *sa traidhātukātmasaṃskārān abhūtaparikalpanā-mātrān paśyati.*

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Das Gupta's *Indian Philosophy*, pp. 425, 426, 428 referring to Gaudapāda's definition of the Absolute. The close agreement between the views of the *Sad. P.*, and Gaudapāda's *Māṇḍūkyakārikā* will be evident from the following passages:

*Sad. P.*, p. 318: *Dr̥ṣṭam hi tathāgatena traidhātukam yathābhūtam na jāyate na mriyate na cyavate nopapadyate na saṃsarati na parinirvāti na bhūtam nābhūtam na sattvam nāsattvam na tathā nānyathā na vitathā nāvitathā. Traidhātukam tathāgatena dr̥ṣṭam yathā balā-prthagjanā na paśyanti...*



bodhicitta never thinks himself as existing either in saṃsāra or nirvāṇa. Hence, an Arhat aspiring to comprehend the ultimate truth should not think of himself as having gone beyond Saṃsāra and established himself in Nirvāṇa. Thus the *Puṇḍarīka* brings out clearly the difference between the Hīnayānic and Mahāyānic Nirvāṇa.

EXISTENCE OF SOUL IS DENIED BUT NIRVĀṆA IS NOT  
ANNIHILATION

Of late, many scholars have tried to elicit from the various passages of the *Nikāyas* dealing with Nirvāṇa the sense which Buddha had in his mind, or at least the sense with which the earliest Buddhism started. Most of the earlier scholars, who did the pioneering work in the field of Buddhism, namely, Childers, Burnouf, Hardy were inclined to interpret Nirvāṇa as *annihilation* or to use the common Indian term *Ucchedavāda*, a dogma which was opposed to the view of the early Buddhists.<sup>1</sup> Professor La Vallée Poussin suggests that this conclusion of the scholars was an inevitable consequence of the denial of soul by the early Buddhists.<sup>2</sup>

The conception of soul and the denial of its existence in the early Buddhist literature constitute as complicated a problem as the interpretation of Nirvāṇa. As the conception of one largely depends on the other, we shall state here briefly the position of the early Buddhists as to their conception of *Pudgala* (soul). The Theravādins are explicit in their statement that the five khandhas, viz., rūpa (material aggregates), vedanā (feeling), saññā (perception), saṅkhārā (impressions) and viññāṇa (consciousness) are the ultimates,

*Māṇḍūkya*, ii. 31, 32: Svapnamāye yathā dr̥ṣṭe gandharvanagaram yathā, tathā viśvam idaṃ dr̥ṣṭam vedāntesu vicakṣaṇaiḥ. Na nirodho na cotpattir na baddho na ca sādhaḥ, na mumukṣur na vai mukta ity eṣā paramārthatā.

*Māṇḍūkya*, iv. 68: Yathā svapnamayo (māyāmāyo or nirmītakō) jīvo jāyate mriyate' pi ca, tathā jīvā amī sarve bhavanti na bhavanti ca.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Saṃyutta*, iii, p. 109: Yamaka harboured the wrong view that Buddha taught that a khīṇāsavo bhikkhu kāyassa bhedā bhijjati vinassati na hoti param maraṇā.

<sup>2</sup> *Nirvāṇa*, pp. vii f.



to which the composition of the world can be reduced. The mass (*khandha* or *saṅgaha*) of material aggregates, feeling, etc., would have remained in their original state dissociated from each other if *avijjā* (ignorance) had not stepped in and constituted (*saṅkhata*) out of them a being (*sattā*) with the sense of 'I'. When and how this *avijjā* of the truth—that the five *khandhas* remain ever dissociated<sup>1</sup> from each other and do not form an individual—came into existence and brought endless miseries has not been told by any teacher not even by Buddha (*purimā koṭi na paññāyati avijjāya*).<sup>2</sup> Evidently, the five *khandhas* alone constitute a being and there is nothing as the sixth, which can be regarded as *Attā* or soul. But still one cannot deny the fact that of the five *khandhas* *viññāṇa*<sup>3</sup> (perception) is the most active constituent and is mainly instrumental in the formation of a being (*nāma-rūpa*). It is produced from *Saṅkhārā*,<sup>4</sup> which again issue out of *avijjā*.<sup>5</sup> According to Buddhaghosa, the belief in a self arises with the ninth link (*viz.*, *upādāna*)<sup>6</sup> of the chain of causation. Hence, on *upādāna* hinge the origin and cessation of worldly existence. The belief in a self (*ahaṅkāra*) is nothing but the false notion of the undisciplined men of the world<sup>7</sup> that one of the five *khandhas* is soul (*attā*). It corresponds

<sup>1</sup> Usually the Pāli texts speak of *Avijjā* as ignorance of the four *ariyasaccas*.

In the *Vis. M.*, (pp. 198, 525) it is equated to *bhavataṇhā* (desire for existence) and in another place (p. 526) it is explained as “*khandhānaṃ rāsattṭhaṃ, āyatanānaṃ āyatanattṭhaṃ, dhātūnaṃ suññattṭhaṃ, indriyānaṃ adhipatiyattṭhaṃ, saccānaṃ tathattṭhaṃ aviditaṃ karotī ti pi avijjā. Paramatthato avijjamānesu itthipurisādīsu javatī, vijjamānesu pi khandhādīsu na javatī ti avijjā. Api ca cakkhuviññāṇādīnaṃ vatthārammaṇaṃ paṭiccasamuppāda-paṭiccasamupannā ca dhammānaṃ chādanato pi avijjā.*”

<sup>2</sup> *Vis. M.*, p. 525.

<sup>3</sup> *Viññāṇa*=six forms of perception through the six organs of sense, *viz.*, *cakkhu*, *sota*, *ghāṇa*, *jivhā*, *kāya* and *mano*.

<sup>4</sup> *Viz.*, *puññābhisāṅkhāro apuññābhisāṅkhāro āneñjābhisāṅkhāro, kāyasāṅkhāro vacisāṅkhāro cittasāṅkhāro. Vibhaṅga*, p. 135.

<sup>5</sup> For a full explanation of *Avijjā*, see *Vis. M.*, p. 526.

<sup>6</sup> *Vis. M.*, p. 569: *Upādāna* is of four kinds: *kāmupādānaṃ, ditṭhupā°, silabbatupā°, and attavādupā°*.

<sup>7</sup> *Dh. S.* 1217; *Vibh.*, p. 375.



to the false notion of Ahaṅkāra as conceived by the teachers of the Sāṃkhya and Vedānta. The Buddhist conception of self (attā) is therefore as much imaginary as the notion of ahaṅkāra in the Brāhmanic systems of philosophy.

Vasubandhu's appendix to the eighth chapter of the *Abhidharmakośa*<sup>1</sup> and the first section of the *Kathāvatthu* throw a flood of light upon the early Buddhist theory of soul. In fact, in the Nikāyas the existence of soul is not categorically denied in answer to direct questions on that point.<sup>2</sup> What the early Buddhists held was that there is no such thing as soul in the sense which had come to be widely accepted previous to the advent of Buddhism, viz., as a persisting, unchangeable entity. "In Buddhism", says Mr. Shwe Zan Aung, "there is no actor apart from action, no percipient apart from perception. In other words there is no conscious subject behind consciousness...Subject, in Buddhism, is not the self-same permanent conscious object but merely a transitory state of consciousness".<sup>3</sup> This conception is identical with Bergson's conception of mind or soul, spirit or ego. Mind or soul, according to Bergson, is not "some sort of permanent substantial reality on which the various states of consciousness are beaded as on a string.... The states of consciousness are each of them the entire mind in one of the phases of its continuous movement... They are not parts or fragments of the mind, members in an endless series which, for no reason, we choose to regard as a unity and call by a single name".<sup>4</sup> In Buddhism, the

<sup>1</sup> Stcherbatsky, *Soul Theory of the Buddhists* (published by the Royal Academy of Sciences, St. Petersburg); La Vallée Poussin, Fr. translation of the *Kośa*, ch. ix.

<sup>2</sup> E.g., *Dīgha*, I, pp. 185 ff; Stcherbatsky, *Soul Theory of the Buddhists*, (p. 846) shows that Buddha would have said 'taṃ jīvaṃ taṃ sarīraṃ' if the questioner had not meant by *Jīva* a soul "as a real living unit, controlling our actions from within". As an answer in the positive or negative about such a soul would be like the discussion about the hardness or softness of the hair of a tortoise, Buddha had to be silent on the point (avyākata).

<sup>3</sup> *Comp. of Phil.*, pp. 7, 8.

<sup>4</sup> *Philosophies, Ancient and Modern, Bergson* by J. Solomon (Constable and Co., 1911), p. 36.



conception of soul as a permanent entity is not only wrong but works as an obstacle to the comprehension of the unreality and transitoriness of things of this world. When Buddhism arose, the term *ātman* had become so very common, and so much associated with the attributes ascribed to it by the teachers of the early Upaniṣads that the Buddhists had no other alternative than to deny its existence as far as possible in order to wipe out from the minds of the people all the deep-rooted ideas. Besides, Buddhism started with the premises that everything whatsoever except Nirvāṇa is unreal;<sup>1</sup> so there could not be any real soul. But it could not do away with the word *ātman*, for the Buddhist texts tell us that the early expositors could not help using the current expressions in propounding their doctrines. They wanted to impress on the minds of the people that there is a continuity of the skandhas kept up by action (*karma*) but there is no persisting, unchangeable and indestructible entity to keep up that continuity. Professor Stcherbatsky puts it thus: "A personality (*pudgala*), in which other systems imagine the presence of a permanent spiritual principle, a soul (*ātman*), is in reality a bundle of elements or forces (*samskārasamūha*) and a stream of thought (*santāna*). It contains nothing permanent or substantial, it is *anātmā*".<sup>2</sup> This definition of soul struck at the root of the supposition of any permanent entity and served fully the purpose of Buddhism, *viz.*, to show that there is nothing in the world to which one can cling as real and permanent and so he must develop a state of mind in which he must drift to the ultimate, real state called Nirvāṇa, without having anything to cling to in the intermediate process.

#### FOUR LINES OF INTERPRETATION IN THE NIKĀYAS

Scholars who took the passages in the Buddhist literature on the denial of soul too literally, without considering the

<sup>1</sup> The nature of unreality varies with the two forms of Buddhism, *Hīnayāna* and *Mahāyāna*; for a discussion of this, see *infra*.

<sup>2</sup> *Con. of N.*, p. 8.



motive for the denial of the soul made at a particular place and in reply to the query of a particular person, believed that the early Buddhists did not admit the existence of soul and that hence the finality reached by perfect beings was complete annihilation, the absence of existence altogether. There were also some scholars, not very many among the earlier group, who inclined to the view that Nirvāṇa was not annihilation but an inexpressible state corresponding to the Vedāntic Brahman. All these scholars, although they held one or other of the two views, complete annihilation or eternal, inexpressible existence, often admitted that Buddha was an agnostic and did not give a definite answer to any of the queries of a metaphysical character, *viz.*, whether there is a soul, or what really is Nirvāṇa. Thus, the opinions of scholars can be classified as follows:—

- (i) That Nirvāṇa is annihilation;<sup>1</sup>
- (ii) That Nirvāṇa is an inconceivable and inexpressible eternal state;
- (iii) That Nirvāṇa has been left undefined (*avyākṛta*) by Buddha.<sup>2</sup> To these may be added the interpretation of Buddhaghosa
- (iv) That Nirvāṇa is eternal, pure and infinite consciousness.

#### NIKĀYAS, A MOSAIC OF MATERIALS OF DIFFERENT TIMES AND PLACES

It should be observed that all those scholars, who arrived at these conclusions, cited passages from the texts of the Nikāyas in support of their findings, and that the views taken by them in most cases followed naturally from those passages. In these circumstances, we have to admit that

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Suzuki, *Outlines of Mahāyāna Buddhism*, p. 351 quoting the *Vimalakīrtisūtra*: “Non-activity and eternal annihilation were cherished by Śrāvakas and Pratyekabuddhas”.

<sup>2</sup> See La Vallée Poussin, *Nirvāṇa*, pp. 9, 87 ff.; also *E.R.E.*, II, p. 377 and his *Way to Nirvāṇa*, p. 134; Beal, *Catena etc.*, p. 172.

According to Colebrooke, Nirvāṇa=profound calm;

„ „ Hardy, Burnouf, Childers, Nirvāṇa=extinction;

„ „ Max Müller, Nirvāṇa=rest;

„ „ Oldenberg, Nirvāṇa=supreme happiness.



the Nikāyas as a whole do not present a coherent system of philosophy and doctrine, but the question is whether, in view of the fact that the Nikāyas took centuries to grow and attain a definite shape, we are entitled to expect from them a coherent system. The Nikāyas are, in fact, a mosaic made up of materials of various times and places, wide apart from each other; hence, it would not be reasonable to expect from them a coherent interpretation of Nirvāṇa. The ancient teachers, too, were puzzled in regard to the correct interpretation of Nirvāṇa, but they never attempted to discover a consistency in the passages of the Nikāyas as a whole. It will be seen from the discussions preserved in the *Kathāvatthu* and the *Abhidharmakośa* that these disputants cited a set of passages in support of their contentions, and not any particular Nikāya or Sūtra. To these ancient disputants each saying was independent, and carried the weight which a number of sayings would do. It is, however, striking that the disputants never questioned the authenticity of the passages cited by their opponents. This shows that a disputant only preferred one set of passages to another and built his theories on that set. The Nikāyas evidently are only a collection of these various passages put in a uniform setting and given the garb of the sūtras. Attempts, of course, are now being made to sift these sūtras and find out the various strata, but it is doubtful how far the efforts will be fruitful in the absence of new evidences. It may be contended that a Piṭaka is a collection of texts made by a particular school of Buddhist thought, and that consistency should be apparent or discoverable in the passages of that Piṭaka. The contention seems reasonable, but the facts are against it. Professor Poussin has discovered in the Nikāyas many passages cited by the Sarvāstivādins in the *Kośa* in support of their contentions, while Mrs. Rhys Davids and Mr. Aung have identified many of the citations of the opponents of the Theravādins in the Pāli Piṭaka, the collection of the Theravādins. This fact indicates that the collection of Pāli sūtras was not made with any sectarian motive and that the compilers of the Pāli Tripiṭaka included in it all the sayings that they could



find out, excepting, very probably, some which went directly against their creeds and dogmas,<sup>1</sup> and for the rejection of which they took the plea of unauthenticity. It is now fairly well known that each Nikāya developed by itself under the special attention of a group of reciters called *Bhāṇakas* who confined themselves exclusively to the preservation of that particular collection.<sup>2</sup> Buddhaghosa, although an orthodox adherent of the Theravāda school, had to acknowledge that even these bhāṇakas differed among themselves regarding the use and sense of certain technical expressions.<sup>3</sup> Thus, we see, that even the orthodox supporters of the Pāli Tripitakas believed that the Nikāyas did not agree in all their interpretations. We should also bear in mind the significant remark found in the *Kośa*<sup>4</sup> that many sūtras were lost, that many of the sūtras underwent slight changes, and that new ideas and expositions were woven around them in such a way that the accretions conveyed a sense different from that of the kernel around which they were set.<sup>5</sup>

#### NIRVĀṆA, THE INCONCEIVABLE STATE, THE INFINITE CONSCIOUSNESS

On account of this admixture of materials, it is possible to make a selection of passages of the Pāli Nikāyas in such a way as to substantiate any one of the four interpretations of Nirvāṇa to which we have referred. The passages which give the impression that Nirvāṇa is annihilation, if read in the light of other passages, which interpret Nirvāṇa as an inconceivable existence, may convey a sense different from annihilation.

<sup>1</sup> A hint to this effect is seen in the *Dīpavaṃsa*, ch. iv.

<sup>2</sup> *Sum. Vil.*, p. 15.

<sup>3</sup> *Vis. M.*, p. 95: Majjhima-bhāṇaka Revatthera; p. 275: idam tāva Dīghabhāṇaka-Saṃyuttabhāṇakānam matam. Majjhimbhāṇaka pana etc. See also pp. 286, 431.

<sup>4</sup> *Kośa*, ii. 55, p. 278 fn. sūtrāni ca bahūny antarhitāni mūlasaṅgītibhramṣāt.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Prof. Poussin's remark in his *Nirvāṇa*, p. 9: "La vieille tradition scripturaire (Petit Véhicule), codifiée, renouvelée, amplifiée par les écoles, est mal datée, en partie tardive, point toujours claire, contradictoire sinon dans ses dogmes du moins dans ses tendances". See also p. 133.



Prof. Keith has, for instance, shown that the simile of the extinction of the flame, which is one of the many important similes relied on by scholars favouring the view of annihilation, has been worked out in the *Aggīvacchagotta sutta* to show that it is not extinction but disappearance in the “deep, unmeasurable, difficult to fathom” state of existence<sup>1</sup>. Buddhaghosa has drawn attention to one or two passages in the *Dīgha*<sup>2</sup> and *Majjhima*<sup>3</sup> *Nikāyas* which present us with quite a new interpretation of Nibbāna. The passage runs thus:

Viññāṇam anidassanam anantaṃ sabbato pabhaṃ.  
 Ettha āpo ca paṭhavī tejo vāyo na gādhati,  
 Ettha dīghan ca rassaṇ ca anuṃ thūlaṃ subhāsubhaṃ,  
 Ettha nāmaṇ ca rūpaṇ ca asesam uparujjhati,  
 Viññāṇassa nirodhena etth’ etam uparujjhatīti<sup>4</sup>.

On a certain occasion a bhikkhu was advised by Buddha to put his question thus:—“What is that place where (distinctions like) water and earth, fire and air have no footing, where long and short, fine and coarse, good and bad, or name and form cease absolutely?” instead of asking “Where do the four elements earth, water, fire and air disappear absolutely?”. (The answer quoted above was given to it.) “It is viññāṇa (consciousness), which is signless, infinite<sup>5</sup>, radiant on all sides

<sup>1</sup> Keith, *B. Phil.*, pp. 65–6: “The comparison is indeed significant, for there is no doubt that the Indian idea of the extinction of fire was not that which occurs to us of utter annihilation, but rather that the flame returns to the primitive, pure, invisible state of fire, in which it existed prior to its manifestation in the form of visible fire”.

<sup>2</sup> *Dīgha*, I, p. 223; *Sum. Vil.* in the *I. H. Q.*, II, i.

<sup>3</sup> *Majjhima*, I, p. 329; *Papañcasūdanī*, I, p. 413.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. the *Majjhima Nikāya* (I, p. 329) passage: Viññāṇam anidassanam anantaṃ sabbato pabhaṃ, taṃ paṭhaviyā paṭhavittena ananubhūtam, āpassa āpattena ananubhūtam, etc. The *Papañcasūdanī* (I, p. 413) comments on it as follows:—Padadvayena (i.e., viññāṇam anidassanam) pi nibbānam eva vuttam. Anantan ti tayidam uppāda-vaya-antarhitattā anantaṃ nāma....Sabbato pabhan ti sabbato pabhāsampannam. Nibbānato hi añño dhammo sappabhataro vā jotimattaro vā parisuddhataro vā paṇḍarataro vā n’atthi, etc.

<sup>5</sup> Buddhaghosa says that it is infinite (ananta) because it has no origin, no decay, no duration (sthitī) and no change.



(sabbato pabham)<sup>1</sup> where all the distinctions mentioned above cease, and where the (constituted) viññāṇa, after cessation, disappears". Buddhaghosa in commenting upon this passage says that the first viññāṇa is another name for Nibbāna<sup>2</sup> while the second viññāṇa is one of the five khandhas. His interpretation, it seems, is based upon a few Nikāya passages. In the *Samyutta Nikāya*<sup>3</sup>, Buddha referring to the parinibbāna of Vakkali bhikkhu said that the wicked Māra was searching for the viññāṇa (consciousness)<sup>4</sup> of Vakkali, who had been just dead, and predicted that Māra's attempt would not be successful because Vakkali had passed away (parinibbuto) with viññāṇa which cannot be localised (*apatitthita*). The sense of *apatitthita-viññāṇa* is given elsewhere in the *Samyutta Nikāya*<sup>5</sup>, where it is explained as consciousness which requires

<sup>1</sup> J. d'Alwis' suggestion of 'pabham' for 'paham' has been preferred here. For a note on this, see *Sacred Books of the Buddhists*, II, p. 283n. Buddhaghosa, it seems, preferred the word "Papam" (from Sanskrit Prapā=a shed on the roadside for providing passengers with water, Aufrecht, *Abhi. Ratnamālā*, p. 283) to "Pabham" more for maintaining the analogy between Nibbāna and sea just mentioned before this passage. He says that just as in a great sea no landing-place is provided for seafarers, so also in Nibbāna there is no particular name corresponding to the 38 kammaṭṭhānas (bases for meditation), through which a monk aims at Nibbāna, i.e., through whatever kammaṭṭhānas (compared here to landing-places) one may reach Nibbāna, there is nothing to distinguish it in Nibbāna. See also *ante*, p. 148, n. 4.

For Prof. O. Franke's notes, see his *Dīgha Nikāya* (Quellen der Religions Geschichte), Leipzig, p. 166n.

<sup>2</sup> *Sum. Vil. (I. H. Q., II, i)*, p. 33: Tattha viññātabban ti viññāṇam; nibbānass' etaṃ nāmaṃ. With regard to the second 'viññāṇa' Buddhaghosa says "Tattha viññāṇan ti carimaka-viññāṇam pi abhisankhāra-viññāṇan ti" (Cf. *Vis. M.*, p. 689). He holds that the viññāṇa, the last consciousness of an arhat, is abhisankhāra (constituted) and that it ceases like the flame of a lamp to pass into a state of indistinguishability (*apaṇṇakabhāva*). Cf. Keith, *B. Phil.*, pp. 47, 48 where Prof. Keith points out that Prof. Franke's attempt to prove that there is much of negativism in early Buddhism favours the view that Nibbāna of early Buddhism was more idealistic than negativistic. See also O. Franke's notes on Nibbāna in the *Z. D. M. G.*, lxix, pp. 475-481.

<sup>3</sup> *Samyutta*, III, p. 124; *Dhp. A.*, I, p. 432: appatitthitena ca viññāṇena Godhiko Kulaputto parinibbuto.

<sup>4</sup> i.e., Paṭisandhiviññāṇa, see *Vbh. A.*, pp. 161, 192f.; *Dhp. A.*, I, p. 432.

<sup>5</sup> *Samyutta*, II, p. 65; III, pp. 53-61.



no support (*patitṭhā* or *ārammaṇa*) for its origin'. It arises only when the attachment (*rāga*) to *rūpa* (material elements of the body), and the other four *khandhas* is removed. It is unconstituted, devoid of growth and independent of any cause and condition and hence free. Being free it is steady; being steady it is happy; being happy it is without any fear of change for the worse; being fearless it attains *parinibbāna*.

In commenting on this passage Buddhaghosa further says that an arhat never has any *maññanā* (thought-construction)<sup>1</sup> in regard to the four elements or *Nibbāna* or anything whatsoever, which a *puthujjana* or a *khīṇāsava*<sup>2</sup> (but not yet an arhat) has. Buddhaghosa thus tries to show that *Nibbāna* is inexpressible, infinite and that any attempt to establish a relation between it and a being is a delusion of the mind. He is also constrained to say that such a description of *Nibbāna* had to be given as a set-off to the arguments of *Brahmā*,<sup>3</sup> hinting thereby that even such statements are not permissible as *Nibbāna* is inexpressible. From such interpretations of the *Nikāya* passages as well as from his exposition of *Nibbāna* in the *Visuddhimagga*, treated later on,<sup>4</sup> it will be apparent that he, far from supporting nihilism, held that *Nibbāna* is a transcendental, indescribable state. In fact, there was hardly any school of Buddhism, which favoured the view of annihilation, and so it seems that the opinions of scholars who supported annihilation do not rest on very sure foundations. Prof. La Vallée Poussin has criticised in detail the views of these scholars. He has given the gist of their views, showing the weak points in them along with his learned dissertation on

<sup>1</sup> The *Nikāya* passages referred to here (*Majjhima*, I, p. 4) were not in harmony with Prof. Stcherbatsky's theory and so they did not appeal to him. See his remarks in *Con. of N.*, p. 42n. The "maññanā" of Buddhaghosa reminds us of one of the passages of the *Prajñā-pāramitās*, in which they assert that all dharmas are like dreams and that Bodhisattvas 'svapnam api na manyante, svapnena na manyante, etc.; see, e.g., *Pañca*. (A.S.B. ms.), leaves 225, 399b: *samsāram samsārato na vikalpayati, nirvāṇam nirvāṇato na vikalpayati* and so forth.

<sup>2</sup> For distinction between an Arhat and a *Khīṇāsava*, see *Papañcasūdanī*, I, p. 42.

<sup>3</sup> *Papañcasūdanī*, II, p. 413.

<sup>4</sup> See *infra*.



the interpretation of Nirvāṇa (Études sur l'histoire de religions, 1925). As in his work he has reviewed most of the writings of his predecessors on Nirvāṇa, we need not deal with them again. For the present purpose, it is sufficient to state his opinion and those of Profs. Berriedale Keith and Stcherbatsky, the three latest exponents of the subject.

#### PROF. LA VALLÉE POUSSIN ON NIRVĀṆA

Prof. La Vallée Poussin starts with the statement that it is possible to distinguish Buddhism on the one hand as popular and devotional, and on the other as clerical and mystic.<sup>1</sup> The former is meant for the laity and the latter for the monks. The popular and devotional form of Buddhism holds out the prospect of paradise to the laity. It is only a means to an end, for the layman in one of his later lives is to become a monk and take to the clerical and mystic side of Buddhism and ultimately attain Nirvāṇa. Prof. Poussin then proceeds to define Nirvāṇa. He says that Nirvāṇa is undoubtedly the highest happiness, putting a stop to duḥkha and transmigration. It implies the absence of merit as well as of demerit. It requires a purely ascetic discipline to bring the desires or passions to an end.<sup>2</sup> The monks unlike the laity do not seek paradise, for even the life in paradise ends with the exhaustion of one's good karma.<sup>3</sup> They therefore seek a state which affords eternal (dhruva) beatitude (sukha).<sup>4</sup> The very common appellation to denote this state is *Amatapadam* (immortality), which Prof. Poussin considers to be a very old and characteristic expression used to describe Nirvāṇa. He thinks that the notion of deliverance has been made precise in the early

<sup>1</sup> *Nirvāṇa*, pp. 1, 7, 8. Cf. Karma and Jñāna of Brāhmanic philosophy; the former leads to svarga (heaven) while the latter to mokṣa (emancipation).

<sup>2</sup> *Nirvāṇa*, p. 4.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *Chāndogya*, 8, 1, 6; Tad yatheha karmajito lokah kṣīyate, evam evāmutra puṇyajito lokah kṣīyate (just as the things produced by efforts of people are exhausted by their use, so also heavenly lives, etc., earned by sacrifices, merits, etc., are exhausted by their use).

<sup>4</sup> *Nirvāṇa*, pp. 48, 60.



**Buddhist literature.** It is an *abode*, supreme and definite, but yet this notion has not been coloured by any positive philosophic doctrine or by speculation upon God, soul, or being in itself.<sup>1</sup> He, as also Dr. E. J. Thomas<sup>2</sup>, refers to the fact that the early Buddhists did not speculate about such Upaniṣadic doctrine as the Parabrahman which was developed by the Vedāntists long after Buddhism. They knew only of the highest heaven called Brahmaloḥa. Dr. Thomas remarks in connection with the *Brahmajāla Sutta* that “among all these views there is no expressed contradiction or even recognition of the Vedāntic theory of Ātman or Brahman as the one ultimate reality”<sup>3</sup>. Prof. Poussin also points out that it is not correct to hold that Buddhism originated purely in opposition to Brāhmanic theories. He says that there is nothing which permits us to affirm that Nirvāṇa was conceived in opposition to any Brāhmanic theory. Nirvāṇa, Immortality, or Deliverance appears to be a rudimentary idea free from all metaphysical speculations. It is connected more with myths than with metaphysics. Nirvāṇa is an invisible abode where the saint disappears, often in the middle of a flame, or in a kind of apotheosis.<sup>4</sup> In short, the Hinayāna Buddhism from the time of the *Mahāvagga* to Buddhaghosa emanated, so to say, from the Yoga almost without any mixture. The Immortal State, the Inexpressible is what a saint aims at, because it is the deliverance from birth and death. It is, however, not possible to establish any relation, philosophical or ontological, between the Immortal and the world of beings who trans-migrate. Immortality is the name given to Nirvāṇa; in other words, perfect happiness, extinction, detachment are terms which are devoid of doctrinal complexities, and which, in fact, appear to signify merely the extinction of the fire of desire, or, to put it in another way, constitute the road to the Immortal State, or the Immortal State itself.<sup>5</sup> It is obvious that Prof. Poussin wants to contradict the long-

<sup>1</sup> *Nirvāṇa*, p. 49: “La notion de la délivrance était précise: l’ascète ne doute pas que la délivrance ne soit un séjour suprême et définitif”.

<sup>2</sup> *Life of Buddha*, p. 200.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> *Nirvāṇa*, p. 57

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 53-4.



advocated view that Nirvāṇa is annihilation. He cites several passages to show that the self-originating fire in which a saint consumed himself, as also the saint himself, was not annihilated.<sup>1</sup> While summarising his views, he gives the following different uses of the term Nirvāṇa :

(i) The Nirvāṇa, the Absolute, the Uncaused which is by itself the Destruction of passion, of duḥkha.

(ii) The complete possession of Nirvāṇa, which reduces all passions and all new existences to the quality of *anutpattika* (not being capable of reproducing); in other words, that which constitutes the saintship, the deliverance from thought (or conceptions), the *Sopadhīśeṣa Nirvāṇa* (Nirvāṇa with corporal residue).

(iii) The consciousness of the possession of Nirvāṇa, consciousness obtained in ecstasy which is beatitude, and which is the best form of Nirvāṇa in the world, and properly speaking, the only Nirvāṇa.

(iv) The possession of the Samādhi of the cessation of ideas and sensations (*saṃjñāvedayitanirodha*), a possession obtainable by saints, perfect or imperfect, a samādhi which appears like entering into Nirvāṇa, and of which one becomes conscious through the body only, since the thought is then stopped.

(v) The entering into Nirvāṇa at the last moment of thought, the end of duḥkha, the entering into *Anupadhīśeṣa Nirvāṇa* (Nirvāṇa without any corporal residue).

(vi) The possession of Nirvāṇa relating to such and such a passion which carries with it the quality of not being able to reproduce itself for such passion and such future existences; an incomplete sanctity which one enjoys in ecstasy.<sup>2</sup>

Prof. Poussin has endeavoured to show that the Nirvāṇa of the early Buddhists is not annihilation; it is a state which may well bear comparison with the paradise of the laity but it is free from the implication of a life in paradise, i.e., unlike the life in a paradise, it is eternal (*dhruva*), it is beatitude, but without any sensation even of

<sup>1</sup> *Nirvāṇa*, p 58.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 83-4.



bliss.<sup>1</sup> It is beyond merit and demerit, a quiescent state which is obtainable in this life by saints when they establish themselves in the samādhi of *saṃjñāveditanirodha* (cessation of ideas and sensations). In this state as the thought is completely stopped, the saint feels only by his body the supreme bliss. He however warns us not to identify the supreme state of bliss with the Vedāntic Parabrahman, for the Buddhists had not yet arrived at that conception. His reason for holding this opinion is, chiefly, that the early Buddhists were not interested, to any appreciable extent, in metaphysical speculations, but were rather busy with myths. Hence, their conception of Nirvāṇa was not of a metaphysical nature but just the utmost possible extension of the conception of paradise.

#### PROF. STCHERBATSKY ON NIRVĀṆA

Prof. Stcherbatsky protests strongly against the view of Prof. Poussin that Nirvāṇa is a sort of ultimate conceivable existence—a view suggested by the expression *Amatapadam*,<sup>2</sup> often used to describe Nirvāṇa, and by the descriptions of the same found in the *Milindapañha* and the *Nikāyas*. Prof. Stcherbatsky does not examine the various passages of the Piṭakas and other works, which influenced Prof. Poussin's conclusions. It would appear from the *Conception of Nir-*

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Dhammasaṅgani*, 1389, 1579 ff.: Nibbāna is not to be taken as accompanied by pīti (delight), sukha (happiness), or upekkhā (equanimity). In the *I.H.Q.*, IV, p. 347, Prof. Poussin says, "Nirvāṇa from the beginning is perfect happiness, the *summum bonum*, much better than any paradise, not a paradise (of course) without any conceivable relations with any form of existence. The canonic literature states clearly that the happiness of Nirvāṇa, end of suffering, is blissful because it is not vedita".

<sup>2</sup> In this connection we may mention that *Amatapadam* does not always necessarily mean "heavenly state". The word 'mr̥tyu' (Pāli *maccu*), in the lines of the *Taitt. Upa.* 2. I. I: *Brahmavidāpnoti param, na punar mr̥tyave*, and *Chā. Upa.* 7. 26. 2: *Tad ekaṃ paśyati na paśyo mr̥tyum paśyati*, is explained by the commentators as neither heavenly existence nor eternal death but as *pramāda* (negligence, error) and *moha* (delusion). This comment is supported by the *Dhammapada* line: *Pamādo maccuno padam*. See *P. T. S. Dict.*, sv. *Maccu*.



vāṇa as well as from his earlier work the *Central Conception of Buddhism* that Prof. Stcherbatsky bases his findings purely on the study of the *Abhidharmakośa* of Vasubandhu, and ignores the fact that the *Kośa* does not present us with the original doctrines which the Piṭakas are supposed to preserve. He also does not attach importance to the fact that the Theravādins and Sarvāstivādins do not agree as to the nature of disintegration of constituted elements (saṃskṛtavastus), which is clearly hinted at in the discussion in the *Kathāvatthu*<sup>1</sup> on the theory of the Sarvāstivādins that “all exists”.<sup>2</sup> In his treatment of the discussion of this topic, however, he refers to the fact that the Vibhajyavādins (=Theravādins) did not always agree with the Sarvāstivādins.

In view of the fact mentioned above, it is doubtful how far Prof. Stcherbatsky was right in attributing to Buddha the views found in the *Kośa* that “(i) Buddha was led to a denial of every permanent principle, (ii) that the originality of Buddha’s position consisted in denying substantiality altogether, and (iii) that forsaking the Monism of the Upaniṣads and the Dualism of the Sāṃkhya, he established a system of the most radical pluralism”.<sup>3</sup> These might have been the views of the later Vaibhāṣikas but were certainly not those of the early Buddhists, not to speak of Buddha himself. Many passages can be, and have been, cited from the Piṭakas<sup>4</sup> to show that Nirvāṇa is a reality, that it is unspeakable and possesses the sign of peacefulness, the taste of immortality, that it offers consolation, that it is unborn, uncreated, and indestructible. In the face of the glowing descriptions that are to be found of the state of Nirvāṇa in early post-canonical works,<sup>5</sup> it is difficult to agree with Prof. Stcherbatsky that Nirvāṇa is nothing but

<sup>1</sup> *Kvu.*, I. 6, pp. 115 f.

<sup>2</sup> *Central Conception of Buddhism*, pp. 43, 76 ff.; Keith’s *B. Phil.*, p. 168; *Con. of N.*, pp. 3, 27; for bibliography on the topic “All exists” see *Kośa*, v. 24, pp. 49, 50 fn.

<sup>3</sup> *Con. of N.*, p. 3.

<sup>4</sup> See besides Prof. Poussin’s *Nirvāṇa*, Heiler’s *Die buddhistische Versenkung*, München, pp. 36–42; *P. T. S. Dict.* sv. Nibbāna.

<sup>5</sup> e.g., *Thera-* and *Theri-gāthā*; *Milindapañha*.



eternal death and that it is an unconstituted element (*asaṃskṛta-dhātu*), because it is tantamount to the absolute annihilation of the constituted elements (*saṃskṛta-dharmas*)—"a kind of entity where there is no consciousness".<sup>1</sup> In fact, Prof. Stcherbatsky's opinion makes it resemble one of the heretical doctrines condemned by Buddha, *viz.*, *Asaññi attā hoti arogo param maraṇā* (the soul remains after death as an unconscious but healthy entity).<sup>2</sup> Without multiplying instances, we can refer to the last few lines of the *Kevāḍḍha Sutta*<sup>3</sup> to show that there are passages in the early Buddhist works which go directly against the conclusions of Prof. Stcherbatsky. If *Nibbāna* is extreme happiness (*paramasukha*), a place of perfect peace<sup>4</sup> (*santivarapadam*), an object of realisation (*sacchikiriya*),<sup>5</sup> it is safer to accept the opinion of Prof. Poussin that *Nirvāṇa* is the highest conceivable paradisaical existence than to agree with Prof. Stcherbatsky that *Nirvāṇa* is simply an end of the *saṃskṛta dharmas*—a stone-like life without a vestige of consciousness.

In short, Prof. Stcherbatsky makes Buddha a materialist and an annihilationist (*Ucchedavādin*) so severely condemned by Buddha. Prof. Stcherbatsky admits this anomalous position of his exposition, and endeavours to extricate himself from the anomaly by stating that Buddha's materialism and annihilationism were of a modified nature, because, as he says, the elements constituting a being were not only material, but both material and spiritual, and hence, according to him, Buddha was not an out-and-out materialist like the *Cārvākas*, or like *Ajita Kesakambalin* and *Pakudha Kaccāyana*, but was partially so. Then, as regards Buddha being not an out-and-out annihilationist he points to the moral law, the strength and importance of which were recognised by Buddha; Buddha meant that the being, which is only a conglomeration of "evanescent elements", passes through a series of existences governed by the moral law, ultimately to be annihilated

<sup>1</sup> *Central Conception of Buddhism*, p. 53.

<sup>2</sup> *Majjhima*, II, pp. 230 f.

<sup>3</sup> *Dīgha*, I, p. 223; for its commentary see *Sum. Vil.* in the *I.H.Q.*, vol., II, i; see *ante*, pp. 148 ff.

<sup>4</sup> *Majjhima*, I, p. 257.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, I, pp. 56, 63, 510.



or, in other words, to attain Nirvāṇa or eternal death. Hence, according to Prof. Stcherbatsky, Uccheda or annihilation takes place not after one life but a series of lives.

#### NIRVĀṆA AS VIEWED BY PROF. KEITH

Prof. Keith on the basis of the Nikāya passages where there is an emphatic assertion of the existence of Nirvāṇa as something unfathomable, unborn, uncreated, unconstituted, and so forth,—a description echoed in the works of Nāgārjuna,—and also on the strength of the discussions in the Buddhistic literature on the existence of the Tathāgata during his life-time or after his decease, thinks that the Madhyamaka view can be traced in the Nikāyas, and that there are “positive assurances of the reality of something over and above the empirical world”.<sup>1</sup> He says further that “the great sermon at Benares on the characteristic of that which is not self does not deny in express terms that there may exist another realm of existence which is exempt from empirical determination, and which therefore must be regarded as absolutely real”.<sup>2</sup> Though Prof. Keith thinks that the view of a section of the early disciples about the “existence of an absolute reality admits of serious support” and that passages or expressions can be traced in the Nikāyas having the colour or flavour of the Brāhmanic *Upaniṣads* or the *Mahābhārata*, he puts forward the proviso that on the basis of these coincidences it would not be proper to say that the Buddhist Nirvāṇa is “essentially the absolute parallel with the Brahman”, for the Buddhists “like every new belief were largely compelled to put their wine in old bottles”.<sup>3</sup> He also does not ignore the fact that there are ample evidences in the Nikāyas to show that “Buddha was a genuine agnostic”,<sup>4</sup> though he himself is not much in favour of the view. In short, Prof. Keith is of opinion that the Nikāyas do not teach annihilation, or eternal death. He finds in Nirvāṇa only a negative aspect of the Absolute or the Void and would not recognize it to be the

<sup>1</sup> Keith, *B. Phil.*, p. 67.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 68.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 61.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 63.



same as Brahman of the Upaniṣads or the Vedāntists. Prof. Poussin also would subscribe to this view if it be taken as the Mahāyānic conception of Nirvāṇa, for, according to him, the Hīnayānic Nirvāṇa is something definite and real, a tangible reality. Prof. Stcherbatsky rises above all hesitations and asserts that the Hīnayānic Nirvāṇa is eternal death, while the Mahāyānic Nirvāṇa is eternal life, and that the latter is the same as the Monism or Advaita Brahman of the Vedāntists.<sup>1</sup> Though he may be partial to Vasubandhu and Nāgārjuna, he cannot be justified in ignoring or explaining away the passages of the Nikāyas which interpret Nirvāṇa differently from Vasubandhu. The opinion of Prof. Poussin that "there is a great deal of Mādhyamika philosophy in the Pāli canon",<sup>2</sup> and the reference of Prof. Keith to passages or suttas of the Nikāyas indicative of the reasonableness of holding such an opinion, appear startling to Prof. Stcherbatsky, and against them he holds without mentioning any authority or citing any passage, that "it is quite impossible to maintain that Hīnayāna is an advaita system"<sup>3</sup> and that it is going too far to see a "full-fledged *Prajñāpāramitā*" in the *Majjhima Nikāya*.

Now that we have stated the views of the latest exponents of the Buddhist conception of Nirvāṇa, we shall proceed to examine some of them in the light of evidences yielded by the Pāli works.

IS SAMJÑĀVEDAYITANIRODHA A FORETASTE OF NIRVĀṆA ?

It is, however, striking that both Profs. Stcherbatsky and Poussin have tried to form an idea of Nirvāṇa on the basis of the quiescent state attained by a yogin at the highest altitude of his meditation. Both agree that it is this quiescence which is aimed at by all saints, including the arhats. To Prof. Stcherbatsky, Nirvāṇa was the highest form

<sup>1</sup> Dr. F. Otto Schrader in his article on *Nirvāṇa* in the *J.P.T.S.* (1904-5) favours the metaphysical conception of the Absolute as the real interpretation of Nirvāṇa of the early Buddhists.

<sup>2</sup> *E.R.E.*, sv. Nirvāṇa. Prof. Poussin has also traced *Vijñānavāda* ideas in the *Aṅguttara*; see his *Nirvāṇa*, p. 65.

<sup>3</sup> *Con. of N.*, p. 42 fn.



of quiescence imaginable and hence it is a condition where there is no vestige of consciousness—an absolute annihilation of life,<sup>1</sup> while to Prof. Poussin it is a condition where the mind (*citta*) does not function, but the body is pervaded by an extremely pleasant feeling; the mind, being inactive, does not enjoy the pleasure.

Prof. Poussin formed his impression mainly from the utterances of perfected saints in the *Udāna* and the *Thera- and Theri-gāthā*. His conception of Hīnayānic Nirvāṇa appears to my mind to be the magnified form of the pleasant sensation felt by saints in the second and third trances. The *Nikāyas* often speak of the pleasant sensation in the second and third trance as similar to that of a person when his body is besmeared with fine powder by an expert bath attendant; but they do not speak about the sensation felt by a saint while in Nirvāṇa. Prof. Poussin is justified in regarding the highest meditation of Saṃjñāvedita- (or vedayita-) nirodha as a foretaste of Nirvāṇa in this world, but his view that the body of the saint is pervaded by blissful sensation is unwarranted.<sup>2</sup> The Pāli texts are quite clear about their definition of this highest meditation. In the *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta*,<sup>3</sup> Buddha entered into meditation before attaining parinirvāṇa and rose from the lowest to the highest samādhi, the *Saññāvedayitanirodha*, when Ānanda, imperfect as he was, took him to be dead (*parinibbūta*). This is the highest meditation to which an adept can reach.<sup>4</sup> The condition of a person in this meditation is almost the same as that of a dead man. The *Samyutta Nikāya*<sup>5</sup> explains the differences thus: There is a complete cessation of the activities in a dead man as well as in a person in the highest samādhi,—i.e., of the (i) physical activities (*kāyasaṅkhāro*) e.g., inhalation and exhalation, (ii)

<sup>1</sup> *Con. of N.*, p. 28.

<sup>2</sup> *Nirvāṇa* pp. 83-4: la possession du recueillement de la cessation de l'idée et de la sensation, possession réservée aux saints complets ou incomplets, recueillement semblable à l'entrée dans le Nirvāṇa et dont on a conscience par le corps puisque la pensée y est interrompue.

<sup>3</sup> *Dīgha*, II, p. 156.

<sup>4</sup> *M. Vr.*, p. 48.

<sup>5</sup> *Samyutta*, IV, pp. 293 f. cf. *Majjhima*, I, p. 301.



speech activities (*vacisaṅkhāro*) e.g., reflection and deliberation (*vitakkavicāra*), and (iii) mental activities (*cittasaṅkhāro*), e.g., ideation and feeling (*saññā ca vedanā ca*)<sup>1</sup>. The life (*āyu*) of the man engaged in meditation is not exhausted as also his internal heat (*usmā*), and his organs of sense remain in a placid condition, while in the deceased person there is no life (*āyu*) and no internal heat (*usmā*) and his sense-organs are defunct. In the *Saññāvedayitanirodha*, a saint cannot at will rise from it. Before entering into the *samādhi*, he fixes the time-limit after which he would revert to the ordinary state of consciousness and he does so at the fixed moment. This meditation in which the mind, the body, and the power of the speech completely cease to function may be likened to the condition of deep sleep (*suṣupti*) of a man. It is similar to the Upaniṣadic conception of "deep-sleep consciousness" in which there is no consciousness either of the objective world or of the self<sup>2</sup>. The Pāli texts nowhere mention a blissful sensation enjoyed by the body apart from the mind. The feeling of ease enjoyed by an ascetic in the highest trance is generated within the body, and not by any contact with an external material thing<sup>3</sup>. The verses in the *Thera-* and *Theri-gatha* and the passages in the *Mahāparinibbāna sutta* describing the last trance of Buddha only express the ecstasy experienced by a perfected saint when he is in the highest trance. It is really the foretaste of what he is going to experience permanently. At the Arhat stage, i.e., on the attainment of the *Sopādisesanibbānadhātu*, he is assured of the fact that the supreme bliss in the inexpressible form of existence is going to be permanently his after the dissolution of his physical body,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Patañjali Yoga-Sūtra*, I. 2: *Yogaścittavṛttinirodhaḥ*.

<sup>2</sup> Ranade, *Constructive Survey of Upaniṣadic Philosophy*, p. 269.

<sup>3</sup> There are passages in the *Nikāyas*, in which it is said that "vimokkhe kāyena phassitvā viharati" (*Aṅguttara*, II, 90). The *Vimokkhas* do not refer to *Nibbāna* but to the eight meditations (*Dīgha*, III, pp. 261-2) or to the three *Samādhis* called *Animitta*, *Appaṇihita*, and *Suññata vimokkhas* (*Vis. M.*, p. 658). These refer only to experiences of meditating saints felt within themselves and not by coming into contact with something external.



or in other words, he is going to be established in the Anupādisesa-nibbānadhātu permanently. The close relation between the meditation of Saññāvedayitanirodha and Nibbāna will be apparent from the verses of the *Udāna* describing the parinibbāna of Dabba Mallaputta :

Abhedi kāyo nirodhi saññā vedanā pi 'tidahamsu sabbā,  
vupasamimsu saṅkhārā viññāṇam attham agamā ti.

[The body is disintegrated, perception stops, all sensations are burnt away, the (three) activities cease and the (constituted) consciousness disappears.]

The Saññāvedayitanirodha, therefore, is very similar to parinibbāna. The *Majjhima Nikāya*<sup>1</sup> adds that a perfect saint not only attains it but also destroys his āsavas (impurities) by knowledge and thus goes beyond the clutches of Māra. Hence, the Saññāvedayitanirodha of a saint is tantamount to a foretaste of Nibbāna only when it is accompanied by the other necessary conditions, viz., destruction of āsavas, insight into the truth and so forth.

#### IS NIRVĀṆA ETERNAL DEATH ?

Prof. Stcherbatsky thinks that Nirvāṇa being allied to Saṃjñāvedayitanirodha, it may be regarded as a state without a vestige of consciousness. In the account of Buddha's parinirvāṇa, Buddha enters into the Saṃjñāvedayitanirodha but he does not stay there permanently. He comes down to the lowest and then rises again to attain parinirvāṇa in the fourth dhyāna.<sup>2</sup> If Nirvāṇa had been a permanent form of Saṃjñāvedayitanirodha, then Buddha would have remained there and attained mahāparinirvāṇa.

To prove his contention that Nirvāṇa is eternal death, Prof. Stcherbatsky takes support from another statement in the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* commented upon in the *Mādhyamika-Vṛtti*.<sup>3</sup> The passage is :

Pradotyasy eva nirvāṇam vimokṣas tasya cetasaḥ.

He attributes to the Vaibhāṣikas the comment which follows this passage in the *Vṛtti*. The Vaibhāṣikas,<sup>4</sup> as

<sup>1</sup> *Majjhima*, I, p. 160 ; III, p. 45.

<sup>2</sup> *Dīgha*, II, p. 156.

<sup>3</sup> *M. Vr.*, p. 525.

<sup>4</sup> *Con. of N.*, p. 191.



is supposed by him, assert in refuting the *abhāva* theory of the Sautrāntikas that there is something 'in which desire is extinct', and that it is not merely 'extinct desire' as the Sautrāntikas think.<sup>1</sup> In the Sanskrit text there is no word or hint about the extinction of consciousness. All that is said is about *trṣṇā*. Prof. Stcherbatsky, however, in his translation says that every desire (also consciousness) is extinct (at final Nirvāṇa).<sup>2</sup> Probably his addition "and consciousness" in the line was suggested by the line that follows, viz., "yasmin sati cetaso vimokṣo bhavati." He translates *cetaso vimokṣah* as "consciousness is quite extinct." It is difficult to accept his English rendering and it is not at all clear why he should prefer "consciousness" to "mind" as the English equivalent of *cetas*. The Pāli version of the line, "Paṭṭotass' eva nibbānaṃ vimokkho cetaso ahū ti",<sup>3</sup> was uttered by Anuruddha to describe Buddha's Nirvāṇa. Buddhaghosa in commenting upon this passage says that *vimokkho* means the removal of all screens hindering vision, and that the extinction of the flame indicates the state of non-manifestation.<sup>4</sup> Prof. Stcherbatsky may have other reasons for such an opinion, but it is difficult to agree with him in regard to the fact that the early Buddhists generally, including the Theravādins, regarded Nirvāṇa as an inanimate reality. In the *Kathāvatthu* and the *Dhammasaṅgani*, Nibbāna has been qualified as *acetasika*, the English rendering of which, according to Mrs. Rhys Davids, should be "not a property of the mind", or according to Prof. Poussin, "where mind does not function any more".<sup>5</sup> Here *acetasika* does not mean inanimate substance, but it is a state where the individual *citta* (=manoviññāna)

<sup>1</sup> Nirvāṇa as Kṣayamātra is discussed in the *Vis. M.*, p. 508; see *infra*, p. 173.

<sup>2</sup> *Con. of N.*, App., p. 191.

<sup>3</sup> *Dīgha*, II, p. 157; see Otto Franke, *Z.D.M.G.*, xlix, p. 476.

<sup>4</sup> *Sum. Vil.* (Burmese ed., Rangoon, 1903), p. 168: Vimokkho ti kenaci dhammena anāvaraṇo vimokkho, sabbaso apaññattibhāvupagamo pajjotanibbānasadisō jāto.

<sup>5</sup> Also "Unmental, automatic" see *Points of the Controversy*, pp. 57ff., 249.



or the *abhisankhāravijñāṇa* of Buddhaghosa<sup>1</sup> ceases to exist; hence Nirvāṇa is not eternal death.

Prof. Stcherbatsky in interpreting Nirvāṇa as an eternal state of death has attached too much importance to the influence of Sāṃkhya on Buddhism.<sup>2</sup> He almost identifies the Vaibhāṣika with the Sāṃkhya School excepting for the conception of Puruṣa in the latter.<sup>3</sup> He says that Nirvāṇa is a lifeless reality corresponding to the undifferentiated matter (*Prakṛti*)<sup>4</sup> of Sāṃkhya. The position of Prof. Stcherbatsky reduces itself to this that the phenomenal world issued out of Nirvāṇa to return to it again by the removal of Avidyā (ignorance), and that Nirvāṇa is the same as the five skandhas in their original undifferentiated state. This is unsupported by the canonical as well as the non-canonical texts. The Sarvāstivādins in enumerating the various 'elements' mention Nirvāṇa as an Asaṃskṛta-dhātu existing side by side with the elements constituting a being. The Theravādins also hold that the five khandhas<sup>5</sup> are nothing but masses of five kinds of elements, out of which a being is constituted through Avidyā. Both the Sarvāstivādins and the Theravādins are emphatic in their statement that a being once constituted out of the seventy-two elements or five khandhas passes through innumerable existences, until by the removal of Avidyā, he enters into the Asaṃskṛtadhātu or Nirvāṇa, which is an element existing by itself. According to the Sāṃkhya School of philosophy, the mokṣa (emancipation) of a being consists in his realisation of the fact that Puruṣa and Prakṛti remain ever apart (*viveka-khyāti*) and not by a being passing from the con-

<sup>1</sup> See *ante*. Prof. Stcherbatsky himself writes elsewhere (*Central Con. of B.*, p. 15) that *citta*=*mano*=*manovijñāṇa*.

<sup>2</sup> See his *Soul Theory of the Buddhists*, p. 824.

<sup>3</sup> *Con. of N.*, pp. 27-8.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> Nowhere in the Buddhist texts, any statement is made that the five khandhas were originally in an undifferentiated state. All that they say is that the material elements of all beings of all times of the Kāmadhātu and Rūpadhātu are collectively called Rūpakkhandha, so also Vedanā, Saññā, Saṅkhārā, and Viññāṇa of all beings taken together are called Vedanākkhandha, Saññākkhandha, Saṅkhārākkhandha and Viññāṇakkhandha. *Vis. M.*, pp. 443, 452.



stituted to the unconstituted state. In Sāṃkhya, the emancipated being is one of the innumerable Puruṣas while in Buddhism he is after death indistinguishable from Nirvāṇa. The agreement between Sāṃkhya and early Buddhism lies in the fact that the undifferentiated matter (Prakṛti)<sup>1</sup> of Sāṃkhya corresponds in its differentiated form to the five khandhas and not to Nirvāṇa as inferred by Prof. Stcherbatsky. If an analogue for Nirvāṇa be sought for in Sāṃkhya we may say that it could have been found in Puruṣa if the innumerable Puruṣas were one Asaṃskṛtadhātu.

#### IS NIRVĀṆADHĀTU A VASTU ?

On the basis of the *Visuddhimagga* and the *Abhidharmakośa*, Prof. La Vallée Poussin remarks that Nirvāṇa is a *vastu*<sup>2</sup> (material substance), a reality, which the body touches when in the highest trance (saṃjñāvedayita-nirodha), while Prof. Stcherbatsky, in consonance with his interpretation of Nirvāṇa, says that it is a “reality (dharma or vastu) in the sense of a materialistic lifeless reality” similar to the Prakṛti of Sāṃkhya. The inclusion of Nibbāna in Asaṅkhata-dhātus along with Ākāśa and the comparison drawn between Ākāśa and Nibbāna make us think that Nibbāna is a substance (vastu, dhātu) similar to Ākāśa.<sup>3</sup> But the expression dhātu is used in Buddhist works in senses as varied as some

<sup>1</sup> Buddhaghosa refers to Pakati-Purisa but does not compare them with Buddhist khandhas. See *Vis. M.*, pp. 518, 525.

<sup>2</sup> See *P. T. S. Dictionary*, p. 176 sv. dhātu-nibbāna. Drs. Rhys Davids and Stede have drawn attention to the fact that dhātu in connection with Nibbāna or Amata does not convey the sense of any thing. It is only a state—the state of Nibbāna, for which they coined the word “Nibbāna-dom or Nibbāna-hood”. On the various meanings of *Vastu*, see *Kośa*, II, p. 285.

<sup>3</sup> The conception of Ākāśa as made by the Sarvāstivādins may be similar to that of the Sāṃkhyas.

Dr. B. N. Seal thinks that “Ākāśa corresponds in some respects to the ether of the physicists and in other, to what may be called proto-atom (prolyle).” See Ray’s *Hindu Chemistry*, p. 88.

The Vaiśeṣikas define Ākāśa as “a simple, continuous, infinite substance and is the substratum of sound.” Prof. Radhakrishnan, *Ind. Phil.*, II, pp. 192-3.



of the other terms, like dhamma, khandha, or saṃkhārā; so it is not safe to interpret the dhātu of Nibbāna-dhātu as a vastu or dravya (thing). As for the reason of the Buddhist writers for selecting Ākāsa as an object of comparison with Nibbāna, it may be said that it was done only because many aspects of Ākāsa were identical with those of Nibbāna, but it does not follow that because Ākāsa is a dhātu, Nibbāna is also a dhātu. Like Ākāsa, Nibbāna is inexpressible; it is beyond empirical determination but not a material substance. In the Buddhist works, the term 'Nibbāna-dhātu' has been used in such a way that one is likely to take it for a substance like Ākāsa or Samudda. In the *Mahāniddeśa*,<sup>1</sup> a large number of bhikkhus is described as attaining nibbāna without residue (anupādisesanibbāndhātu) but causing no perceptible increase or decrease in the 'Nibbānadhātu'. The *Milindapañha*<sup>2</sup> compares Nibbāna to Ākāsa or Samudda implying thereby that it exists but its form, location, age, or measure cannot be ascertained. It is like space (Ākāsa) without origin, life or death, rise or fall. It is uncovered and supportless and is infinite. Just as birds fly about in the Ākāsa or animals float about in the sea so also the perfect (Ariyas) move about in the Nibbāna-dhātu. It is like fire without a continued objective existence. Just as fire remains latent unless and until two pieces of wood are rubbed to make it patent, so Nibbāna which is without any continued objective existence is called forth into being when the necessary conditions are put together. The *Kathāvatthu*<sup>3</sup> in connection with the discussion of 'Amatadhātu' maintains the same position. It shows that the Theravādins declined to agree with the Pubbase-liyas who held that Nirvāṇa (Amata) is a material object.

<sup>1</sup> *Mahāniddeśa*, I, p. 132; *Kvu.*, p. 124; *Mil.*, pp. 316: Atthi-dhammassa nibbānassa rūpaṃ va saṅghānaṃ va vayaṃ va paṇānaṃ apaññāpanaṃ. Cf. *Samyutta*, II, pp. 124-6.

<sup>2</sup> *Mil.*, p. 320: Yathā Mahārāja ākāso na jāyati na jīyati na miyati na cavati no uppajjati duppasaho acorāharaṇo anissito vihaḡagamano nirāvaraṇo ananto evaṃ eva kho mahārāja nibbānaṃ na jāyati..... ariyagamanaṃ.....anantaṃ.

<sup>3</sup> *Kvu.*, ix. 2.







(i) **ETHICAL.** The ethical conception of Nirvāṇa has received the largest amount of attention in the Pāli texts as well as in the writings of modern scholars. The Nikāyas abound in terms and passages expressive of the ethical conception of Nirvāṇa so much so that Dr. Stede wrote as late as 1923 that “Nibbāna is purely and solely an *ethical* state to be reached in this birth by ethical practices, contemplation, and insight. It is therefore not transcendental”.<sup>1</sup> This opinion is not supported by facts. Throughout the Nikāyas, Nibbāna is described as the destruction (khaya) of attachment (rāga), hatred (dosa) and delusion (moha), of desire (taṇhā), impressions (saṅkhārā), and firm grasp of wrong ideas (upādāna), of impurities (āsava) and afflictions (kilesa), and of desire for existence (bhava), birth (jāti), old age, death (jarāmaraṇa), and thus of misery (dukkha). In describing the positive aspect of Nibbāna, the Nikāyas state that it is a condition which is very happy (accantasukha), imperishable (accuta), steady (acala, dhīra), tranquil (santa) and free from fear (akutobhaya). It is the state of the highest bliss (amata). The ethical conception of Nirvāṇa appealed so much to the Buddhist authors that they wrote literary pieces of great poetical excellence in order to pay glowing tributes to the attainment of same.

(ii) **PSYCHICAL.** Many scholars have dealt with the psychical aspect of Nirvāṇa but without laying sufficient emphasis upon its significance. This aspect of Nibbāna is generally brought out in those passages of the Nikāyas, which treat of the Jhānas or the path of contemplation. The object of Jhānas is to bring the mind into such a state that it will be above worldly pleasure and pain. It can be effected by dissociating the mind completely from all worldly matters. This is achieved by means of the trances, the highest of which is the Saññāvedayitanirodha. From the foregoing discussion about the highest trance, it is evident that Nibbāna is psychically Saññāvedayitanirodha provided

<sup>1</sup> See *P. T. S. Dict.*, sv. Nibbāna. The part of the Dictionary, containing the article on Nibbāna was published after the death of Dr. Rhys Davids.



that the adept complies with the other necessary conditions of Arhathood. In course of our exposition of the various dhātus, it has been shown that an adept in the first jhāna rises mentally to the same level as that of the denizens of the Rūpabrahmaloka, and gradually proceeding higher and higher develops a mental state corresponding to that of the beings of the Nevasaññānāsaññāyatana—the highest plane of existence in the three worlds. He acquires the five transcendental powers (abhiññā), viz., performing supernatural feats (iddhividha) such as visiting the Brahmaloaka; acquiring divine ear (dibbasota) and divine vision (dibbacakkhu), knowing others' thoughts (paracittavijānana), and remembering former existences (pubbenivāsānussati). According to the Buddhist conception, an adept who is capable of rising up as high as the eighth trance (nevasaññānāsaññāyatana) is as powerful as the gods of the highest Arūpabrahmaloka. The stage of Nibbāna being still higher, he has to rise further in trance and attain the Saññāvedayitanirodha, where his mind stops functioning and hence there is no perception or sensation. He is now fit to stay in the Apariyāpannadhātu or Lokuttaradhātu. While in this trance, he has a foretaste of Nibbāna, which is going to be his permanently. He acquires the sixth abhiññā, viz., knowledge of the destruction of his impurities (āsavakḥayakāraṇañāṇa)<sup>1</sup> and of the consequent attainment of emancipation. His mental faculties then become so very clear<sup>2</sup> that he understands with a moment's thought all that is happening around him. He is now possessed of full illumination, i.e., he is enlightened.

(iii) METAPHYSICAL. The metaphysical aspect of Nibbāna presents the greatest difficulties to the students of Buddhism and has been the source of many controversies. There is

<sup>1</sup> The usual expression is, āsavānaṃ khayā anāsavaṃ cetovimuttiṃ paññāvimuttiṃ diṭṭhe va dhamme sayama abhiññā sacchikatvā upasam pajja viharati. *Dīgha*, III, p. 281.

<sup>2</sup> See *Jātaka*, I, p. 106 *Vaṇṇupatha Jāt.*: Obhāsamattam=supernatural illumination while striving to attain jhāna. Cf. *Dīgha*, II, p. 33; *Saṃyutta*, II, pp. 7, 105: cakkhum udapādi ñāṇam udapādi paññā u° vijjā u° āloko u°; *Paṭis. M.*, II, p. 150: "Āloko udapādi ti" obhāsaṭṭhena.



no end of metaphorical terms and passages in the Nikāyas to describe Nibbāna admitting of a metaphysical interpretation. The notable passage of the *Itivuttaka*<sup>1</sup>: ‘Atthi, bhikkhave, abhūtam akatam asaṅkhatam’ shows that the early Buddhists conceived of Nibbāna not as annihilation but as something positive,<sup>2</sup> which is, however, infinite and indescribable like Ākāsa. It is called a dhātu (realm) beyond the three dhātus,—the Apariyāpanna- or Lokuttara-dhātu. It is a state to be realised (sacchikātabba) within one’s own self (paccattam veditabbo viññūhi). It is homogeneous (ekarasa) and in it there is no individuality. It is like the disappearance of flame in the fathomless state of existence in the infinite.

The few passages of the *Dīgha* and *Majjhima Nikāyas*, in which Nibbāna has been equated to infinite consciousness (anantaviññāṇa) do not, however, find support in other portions of the same works, which throw light on the conception of Nibbāna. All that can be said under the circumstances is that these passages were later interpolations made at a time when the *Saṃyutta Nikāya* was being compiled. The account of the death of Vakkali with apatiṭṭhitaviññāṇa and not paṭisandhiviññāṇa hints that the constituted viññāṇa of an Arhat passes away and mixes up indistinguishably with an ever existing infinite consciousness. This seems to be an anticipation of the Viññānavāda school of philosophy, but we cannot deny the existence of a trend of thought like this among the early Buddhists. The more accurate conception of Nibbāna would certainly be that it is a state beyond the domain of word and thought and possible of realisation only within one’s own self.

## SECTION II

The Pāli Nikāyas, as already pointed out, are a mosaic composed of materials of various times and regions; hence they yield divergent opinions regarding the conception of Nibbāna. But the one presented above is supported by most of the suttas of the Nikāyas and can be treated as

<sup>1</sup> *Itiv.*, p. 37.

<sup>2</sup> *Kvu.*, p. 124; see also *Mil.*, p. 316.



the earliest. We shall now pass on to some of the later Buddhistic works and ascertain from them how far the early conception of Nibbāna was retained in later times and what changes, if any, were introduced.

#### THE *Kathāvatthu* ON NIRVĀNA

Before we deal with the *Visuddhimagga*, we may well examine the few remarks scattered here and there in the *Kathāvatthu* regarding the conception of Nibbāna.<sup>1</sup> While discussing the existence of puggala, the *Kathāvatthu* makes a remark showing that it conceives Nibbāna as a real and eternal state. It says that if puggala (soul) be taken as not disintegrating with the disintegration of khandhas, this will entail sassatavāda, for the soul becomes eternally existent like Nibbāna.<sup>2</sup> Buddhaghosa in commenting upon this says: Yathā hi nibbānaṃ na uppajjati na bhijjati evaṃ hi puggalo<sup>3</sup> (just as Nibbāna does neither originate nor decay so would be the soul). Thus we see that the *Kathāvatthu*, supported by Buddhaghosa, takes Nibbāna as an eternal state without origination and decay, and does not consider a parinibbuta puggala as sassata.<sup>4</sup> In other connections too, the *Kathāvatthu* remarks that Nibbāna is eternal and unchangeable (nibbānaṃ dhuvam sassataṃ avipariṇāmadhammaṃ).<sup>5</sup> It also says that Nibbāna unlike ñāṇa (knowledge) exists by itself like rūpa or cakku and does not require any ārammaṇa (basis) to arise.<sup>6</sup> Unlike sīla (morality), phassa (contact) and vedanā

<sup>1</sup> Though according to the orthodox tradition, it is canonical it may also be treated as non-canonical as it was composed after the canon had been closed. For the present purpose, we leave out of account the various aspects (guṇa or ākāra) of Nibbāna. It has been dealt with by Prof. Poussin in his *Nirvāṇa*, pp. 158 ff.

<sup>2</sup> *Kvu.*, I. i. 170 (p. 34): Khandhesu bhijjamānesu no ce bhijjati puggalo, puggalo sassato hoti nibbāna-samasamo.

<sup>3</sup> *Kvu.* A., p. 25.

<sup>4</sup> *Kvu.*, p. 61.

<sup>5</sup> *Kvu.* I. 6 (p. 121); see also the note of the commentator in the *Points of the Controversy*, p. 63 fn.

<sup>6</sup> *Kvu.*, IX. 5; cf. *Dh.* S. 1408, 1415, 1418: Rūpañ ca nibbānañ ca anārammaṇā.



(feeling), it is acetasika (not a property of the mind)<sup>1</sup> and is unconnected with mind (citta-vippayutta).<sup>2</sup> It is asaṅkhata (unconstituted)<sup>3</sup> because it possesses the three signs, viz., no origination (uppāda), no destruction (vayo) and no change (na thitānam aññathattaṃ paññāyati).<sup>4</sup> The *Kathāvatthu* thus conceives Nibbāna as existing eternally without origin, decay and change, and is beyond all description.

#### THE *Visuddhimagga* ON NIRVĀṆA

In the *Visuddhimagga*,<sup>5</sup> Buddhaghosa retains the conception found in the *Kathāvatthu* and selects only those passages from the Nikāyas which lend support to his view. In describing its guṇas, he comments on a passage of the *Aṅguttara Nikāya* (ii. 34) where Nibbāna is described as suppressing pride, removing lust, destroying ālaya (of the five kāma-guṇas), and arresting the cycle of existence in the three worlds. While commenting on the etymology of the word Nibbāna,<sup>6</sup> he says that it is the going out of the 'vana' which is a synonym of taṇhā and is so called because it acts as a hindrance to the four kinds of birth (yonis), five forms of existence (gatis), seven viññāṇa existences (i.e. the planes of existence above the Arūpa worlds) and nine sattāvāsas (abodes of sentient beings). This shows only the aspect of quietude (upasama) of Nibbāna. He then takes up the well-known passage of the *Samyutta Nikāya* (iv. 362, 369 ff.)<sup>7</sup> to show that Nibbāna is truth, transcendental, difficult to be seen, without decay, eternal, indescribable immortal, happy, peaceful, wonderful, healthy, pure and is an island of refuge. It appears from the selection of passages made by Buddhaghosa that he is a supporter

<sup>1</sup> *Kvu.* IX. 7; cf. *Dh.* S. 1513: Katame dhammā acetasikā? Cittaṇ ca rūpaṇ ca nibbānaṇ ca.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* XIV. 6; cf. *Dh.* S. 1515: Katame dhammā cittavippayuttā? Rūpaṇ ca nibbānaṇ ca.....

<sup>3</sup> *Dh.* S. 1439.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 60. cf. *Dh.* S. 1416: Nibbānaṃ na vattabbam uppannaṃ ti pi anuppannaṃ ti; see also 1534, 1535.

<sup>5</sup> *Vis. M.*, pp. 293, 294.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> Also dealt with by Prof. Poussin in his *Nirvāṇa*, pp. 153, 154.



of the view that Nibbāna is eternal and that it is a lokottara<sup>1</sup> state beyond the Kāma, Rūpa and Arūpa dhātus.

Buddhaghosa's conception of Nibbāna is well brought out also in his arguments against the Sautrāntika view of the non-existence (*abhāva*) of Nibbāna.<sup>2</sup> He starts with the assertion that Nibbāna brings peace of mind (*santi*), and has the taste of imperishableness (*accuti*) and solace (*assā-sakaraṇa*), and brings one to a state of mind which is inexpressible (*nippapañca*), and in which differentiations disappear (*animitta*). He then takes up the view of his opponents, evidently the Sautrāntikas, that Nibbāna does not exist like the horn of the hare because of its non-perceptibility (*anupalabbhaniyato*), and meets it by saying that Nibbāna does exist and is realisable if the right path be followed—the realisation being similar to the cognizance of others' thoughts in the transcendental plane (*lokuttara-citta*)<sup>3</sup> by the power of knowing the thoughts of others (*cetopariyāyañāṇa*).<sup>4</sup> One is not justified in saying that a thing does not exist because it cannot be perceived by ordinary men. He states further in support of his contention that if the existence of Nibbāna be denied, the practices of *Sammā-diṭṭhi*, etc., become fruitless (*vañjhābhāvo āpaṭṭati*). To this the opponent answers: The practices are not really fruitless since they lead to realisation of *abhāva* (*i.e.*, Nibbāna as total absence of every thing).

Buddhaghosa: If Nibbāna be merely *abhāva*, then the absence (*abhāva*) of past and future would also be Nibbāna, but it is surely not.

Opponent: The absence of the present might be Nibbāna.

Buddhaghosa: The absence of the present (*vattamāna*) is not possible, for it is self-contradictory, because it must be either past or future. Besides, it would also

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Dh. S.* 1447; *Laṅkā.*, p. 157 see *ante*.

<sup>2</sup> *Vis. M.*; pp. 507–9.

<sup>3</sup> See Shwe Zan Aung's *Comp. of Phil.*, p. 12: transcendental consciousness beyond Kāma, Rūpa and Arūpa dhātus.

<sup>4</sup> It is one of the *Abhiññās* possessed by Arhats, see *Vis. M.*, p. 431.



be incorrect to say that the absence of the present is Nibbāna, for in the present life at a certain moment (*vattamānakkhandhanissitamaggakkhaṇe*)<sup>1</sup> one obtains the *sopādisesa-nibbānadhātu* (i.e., Nibbāna with corporal residue).

Opponent: Would it not be equally incorrect to say that at that moment there was the non-presence of kilesas (impurities)?

Buddhaghosa: To deny the non-presence of kilesas would be to deny the efficacy of the Ariyamagga, and that is impossible.

This reply of Buddhaghosa did not, it seems, convince his opponent who passed on to the next argument as to whether the *khaya*, i.e., destruction of attachment (*rāgakkhaya*), etc. should be taken as Nibbāna.<sup>2</sup> Buddhaghosa answered in the negative, saying that in that case arhathood would also be mere extinction. Besides to take Nibbāna as *khaya* (destruction) of something would make Nibbāna impermanent, constituted, and disconnected with *sammāvāyāma*, etc. To this the opponent replied: It would not be wrong to say that because a thing after its decay has no more origination, it has attained Nibbāna.

Buddhaghosa: Decay of this sort does not enter into the question; even if it be so considered, it would not support the contention of the opponent, for it is the ariyamagga which produces (lit. turns into) the state of Nibbāna (*bhāva*), and it is the ariyamagga which destroys evil and prevents its reappearance, because it is the stage (*upanissayatta*) for final destruction without the possibility of further origination (*anuppattini-rodhasaṅkhatassa khayassa*); that of which it forms the basis (*upanissaya*) is destroyed by conduct.

The opponent then took up the third argument inquiring why Nibbāna had not been given a description (*sarūpen' eva kasmā na vuttan ti ce?*).

<sup>1</sup> For *Maggakkhaṇa* see *Paṭis.*, *M.*, I, pp. 69f; *Vis. M.*, pp. 681, 682. For *Phalakkhaṇa* see *Vis. M.*, p. 680.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *M. Vr.*, p. 525: Sautrāntikas say: *Nanu ca yo'sya nandirāgasahagatāyās tṛṣṇāyāḥ kṣayo virāgo nirodho nirvāṇam ityuktam.*



**Buddhaghosa:** Because it is exceedingly subtle; so extremely subtle, indeed, that Buddha even once thought of not preaching it at all; it can be seen by ariyacakkhu only (*i.e.*, realisable by Arhats only). Being associated with the magga, it is extraordinary (*asādhāraṇa*), and its beginning being absent, it is devoid of origin.

**Opponent:** It is not without origin because it originated out of the magga.

**Buddhaghosa:** It was not originated by the magga; it can be attained only by following the magga; hence it is originless, and consequently decayless and deathless; being without origin, decay and death, it is eternal (*nicca*).

A fourth argument was put forward by the opponent, which is as follows:

**Opponent:** Would it not be objectionable to regard Nibbāna as eternal like the *aṇu* (atom)?

**Buddhaghosa:** No. Nibbāna has no *hetu* (cause) as *aṇu*s have; so it cannot be compared to the *aṇu*.

**Opponent:** Is Nibbāna eternal on account of its eternal nature (*i.e.* does any quality of eternalness adhere to Nibbāna)?

**Buddhaghosa:** That cannot be, in view of the fact that the *aṇu*, etc., are not realised (*asiddhatta*) by the magga.

Buddhaghosa in conclusion said that for the reasons he had put forward Nibbāna is eternal and, being devoid of the nature of form, is formless (*arūpa*). There is only one Nibbāna, and not different Nibbānas for different Buddhas. He then showed that it is called *sopādisesa-nibbāna* when there remains a corporal residue (*upādisesa*), though a complete destruction of impurities has been effected by meditation (*bhāvanā*). It is called *nirupādisesa-nibbāna*<sup>1</sup> on the disappearance of *upādisesa*, which happens on account of the absence of any kind of manifestation after the last thought

<sup>1</sup> For *sopādisesa* and *nirupādisesa nibbāna*, see also *M. V.*, p. 519.



of kammaphala. This is due to the stopping and uprooting of samudaya (causes of origin). In short, it cannot be said that Nibbāna does not exist in view of the fact that it is attainable by means of special knowledge obtained by unflagging zeal; that its existence is indicated by the words of the omniscient Buddha; and lastly that it exists in reality (paramatthena sabhāvato) is indicated by the words: Atthi bhikkhave ajātam abhūtam akatam asaṅkhatam (*Itiv.*, p. 37; *Ud.*, p. 80).

The *Paramatthamañjūsā*,<sup>1</sup> in commenting upon this portion of the *Visuddhimagga*, argues in its own way for the existence of Nibbāna. It starts by saying that Buddha can never utter an untruth; so when he says "atthi bhikkhave ajātam etc.", it has to be admitted that the unconstituted dhātu, Nibbāna, in the highest sense, does exist. It cannot be abhāva (absence of anything) because of the fact that Buddha described Nibbāna as deep, immeasurable, difficult to be understood, etc. These can be said only of an existent state or object, and not of anything non-existent. Anything non-existent must in every way be non-existent. The following question may, however, arise as to the nature of abhāva of kilesas, to which attention is drawn by the Theravādins as an aspect of Nibbāna: Whether the abhāva of kilesas existing in beings is one or many. If the abhāva be one, then it should be effected by one path (magga) and there is no need of many maggas (evidently referring to the four maggas sotāpatti, sakadāgāmi, anāgāmi, and arahatta), and all beings should attain Nibbāna at the same time. This objection is answered thus: If the abhāva be taken as one, then it is the abhāva of kilesas which is effected by the realisation of Nibbāna. It is in fact not an effect of magga, it is a thing to be envisaged. The opponents may say that there is no need of maggas, as it is not necessary to give up the kilesas, and there being no question of giving up kilesas and putting an end to dukkha, what is the use of the realisation (sacchikiriya) of kilesā-

<sup>1</sup> *Visuddhimagga Tīkā* of Ānanda (Burmese ed.) edited by Saya U. Pye, 1910, vol. II, pp. 618-620.



abhāva. The objection is answered thus: Each magga has some definite function to perform. The sotāpattimagga removes the first three saṃyojanas, the sakadāgāminimagga reduces rāga, dosa and moha to their minimum, while the anāgāminimagga eradicates them, and lastly the arahatta puts an end to all saṃyojanas. Abhāva is really one, and it should not be inferred that there are many abhāvas because many kinds of kilesas are eradicated, i.e., it does not follow that because there are sakkāyadiṭṭhi-abhāva, rāga-abhāva and moha-abhāva, there are so many abhāvas. Abhāva is really one and does not vary according to the nature of the object, of which, there is abhāva; so the abhāvas are not to be regarded as five, because the five saṃyojanas are removed. It is only the common usage of the term that implies the existence of many abhāvas. The state of abhāva (absence of anything) cannot but be one, so Nibbāna is not many but one. The *Tīkā* concludes its argument by saying that the abhāva is effected by maggas, each magga producing its own effect, and that abhāva is not to be envisaged (na sacchikātabbo), while Nibbāna is to be envisaged; hence, the abhāva of kilesas is not identical with Nibbāna.

#### THE *Abhidharmakośa* ON NIRVĀṆA

In the *Abhidharmakośa* Vasubandhu expatiates on the Vaibhāṣika conception of Nirvāṇa. He first asserts that Nirvāṇa is one of the Asaṃskṛtas (unconstituted), and as against the objection of the Sautrāntikas that it might be a result produced by the mārga, he says that the mārga leads to the attainment or possession of Viśaṃyoga (disconnection) or Nirvāṇa and that it is self-existent and not the fruit of mārga.<sup>1</sup> In answering the question of the Sautrāntikas as to the nature of the dharma called Viśaṃyoga or Pratisaṃkhyā-nirodha, the Vaibhāṣikas state that it is a dharma, the nature of which is real and inexpressible; only the Āryas realise it inwardly and individually. It is only possible to indicate its general characters, when the Pratisaṃkhyā-niro-

<sup>1</sup> See *Kośa*, ii. 55. Cf. *Vis. M.*, p. 508 dealt with before for a similar argument against the Sautrāntikas.



dha is said to be an entity (dravya), real, good, eternal, and distinct from others, it is called the Visamṃyoga.

The Sautrāntikas in their zeal to establish that Nirvāṇa is abhāva (absence of passions, etc.) argue that the Asaṃskṛtas (the unconditioned) are not real like the entities rūpa (form), vedanā (feeling), etc. They cite the instance of Ākāśa, which is, according to the Sarvāstivādins, an Asaṃskṛta-dhātu, and point out that Ākāśa (space) is nothing but the absence of something tangible, or in other words, of any resisting substance. Just as a man in darkness says it is ākāśa (vacuity or space) when he is not cognisant of the existence of anything tangible or resistible, so also the Ākāśa of the Sarvāstivādins should be understood. Analogically they assert that the second Asaṃskṛta-dhātu of the Sarvāstivādins, namely, the Pratisaṃkhyā-Nirodha, is really the destruction of anuśayas (desires) and existence already produced, and the non-origination of any further anuśayas; and as this is achieved by means of knowledge (pratisaṃkhyā), it is called Pratisaṃkhyā-nirodha. The third Asaṃskṛtadhātu, the Apratisaṃkhyā-nirodha, is the absence or non-origination of dharmas on account of the complete absence of causes<sup>1</sup> independent of the force of knowledge (apratisaṃkhyā), e.g., when death before its time interrupts the existence, it is said that there has been Apratisaṃkhyā-nirodha of dharmas which would have been born in course of this existence if the existence had continued.<sup>2</sup>

In this connection the Sautrāntikas mention the opinion of Sthavira Śrīlābha, also a Sautrāntika teacher, who interpreted the pratisaṃkhyā-nirodha as the future non-origin of passions due to knowledge (praññā), and the apratisaṃkhyā-nirodha as the future non-origin of duḥkha, i.e., of existence due to the disappearance of passions and not directly due

<sup>1</sup> Yamakami Sogen prefers "condition" (pratyaya) to causes. See his *Systems etc.*, p. 164. He explains Apratisaṃkhyānirodha (p. 167) as the "non-consciousness of dharmas or things which would have forced their way into our consciousness but for the engrossment of our attention by something else. Apratisaṃkhyānirodha, accordingly, is a thing of daily occurrence in everybody's life."

<sup>2</sup> *Kośa-vyākhyā* (B. Buddhica), pp. 16-18.



to knowledge. The former, it is said, refers to *sopādiśeṣa-* and the latter to *anupādiśeṣa-nirvāṇadhātu*.<sup>1</sup> The Sautrāntikas did not approve of the distinction made by Śrīlābha between *Pratisamkhyā* and *Apratisamkhyā*. According to them, the future non-origin of *duḥkha* implies *pratisamkhyā*; so, in fact, *apratisamkhyā-nirodha* is included in the *pratisamkhyā-nirodha*.

The Sautrāntikas considered also the opinion of another school, supposed to be the Mahāsāṅghikas according to the Japanese editor of the *Kośa*. The Mahāsāṅghikas define *apratisamkhyā-nirodha* as the posterior non-existence (*paścād abhāva*) of dharmas already born by virtue of their spontaneous destruction. In this definition, *apratisamkhyā-nirodha* is not eternal in view of the fact that it does not arise as long as the *anuśayas* do not perish.

The object of the Sautrāntikas is to show through these definitions that the *pratisamkhyā-nirodha* implies an antecedent, *viz.*, *pratisamkhyā* and hence it cannot be eternal (*nitya*), because, if the antecedent be wanting, the consequence also becomes wanting. The Sarvāstivādins met this by arguing that the Sautrāntikas were not entitled to say that *pratisamkhyā* is anterior and the non-origin of unborn dharmas posterior. The fact is, as the Sarvāstivādins thought, that the non-originated always exist by themselves; so when the *pratisamkhyā* is lacking, the dharmas are born; if and when *pratisamkhyā* arises, the dharmas are not born absolutely. The efficacy (*sāmarthyā*) of the *pratisamkhyā* in regard to the non-origin of dharmas is shown thus:

(i) before *pratisamkhyā* there is no obstacle in the way of the origin of dharmas; and

(ii) after *pratisamkhyā*, *i.e.* *pratisamkhyā* being given, the dharmas, the origin of which has not been stopped previously (*akṛtotpattipratibandha*), are not born.

(1) Then as against the view of the Sautrāntikas that *Nirvāṇa* is simply non-production (*anutpāda*) of dharmas,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Vis. M.*, dealt with above. See Prof. La Vallée Poussin's article on the two *Nirvāṇadhātus* according to the *Vibhāṣā* in *I. H. Q.*, vol. vi, pp. 39-45.



the Sarvāstivādins cite a sūtra from the *Samyukta Āgama* (26.2) in which it is stated that the practice and culture of the five faculties, faith etc., have for their result the abandonment of duḥkha, past, present, and future. In fact, this abandonment (prahāṇa) refers to nothing else than Nirvāṇa and is solely of a future dharma and not of a past or present dharma. The Sautrāntikas cannot accept it and interpret this passage somewhat differently, saying that the "abandonment" refers to the abandoning of passions (kleśas) relating to duḥkha, past or present, and citing some other passages from the *Samyukta Āgama* in support of their contention. They argue that the passions, past and present, produce in us some germs to originate future passions: when these germs are killed, the passions, past and present, are abandoned. It is with reference to this fact that one says that the action (karma) and the result (phala) have been destroyed. Therefore by the abandonment of a future duḥkha or future passion one understands that the duḥkha or passion will not be born any more owing to the absence of germs.

(2) The Sarvāstivādins then take up a second argument, found also in the *Visuddhimagga*,<sup>1</sup> which inquires why it has been stated in the *Samyukta Āgama* (31.12) that "of all dharmas, constituted or unconstituted, virāga (detachment) is the best". If a dharma be non-existing, how can a statement like the above be made? The Sautrāntikas explain this by asserting that they admit its existence, as they admit that of a sound which has no existence before it is produced and after it has died away. The quotation praising "virāga" may well refer to a non-existent unconditioned thing, the absolute non-existence of everything evil.

(3) The third argument of the Sarvāstivādins is that if the Pratīsamkhyā-nirodha or Nirvāṇa be non-existent, why is it mentioned as one of the Truths. The Sautrāntikas answer that truth (satya) is taken in the sense of "not-inexact" (aviparīta). The Āryas realize what exists and

<sup>1</sup> *Vis. M.*, p. 507.



what does not exist in a “not-inexact” manner; in that which is suffering (duḥkha) they see only duḥkha; in the non-existence of duḥkha, they realize the fact of the non-existence of same. Really, there is no contradiction in taking the “non-existence of duḥkha” or the *pratisaṃkhyā-nirodha* as a Truth. And this non-existence is the third Truth, because the Āryas see and proclaim it immediately after the second.

(4) The Sarvāstivādins then have recourse to the fourth argument that if the *asaṃskṛtas* be non-existent, how is it that knowledge has non-existent things as its basis (*ārammaṇa*). The Sautrāntikas dismiss this objection by remarking that they find in it nothing against their theory, and say that they will explain it in connection with the discussion of the past and the future.<sup>1</sup>

(5) The fifth argument of the Sarvāstivādins relates to the nature of the consequence found by the Sautrāntikas in the maintenance of their theory that the unconditioned really exist. The Sautrāntikas point out the unreasonableness of regarding the existence of a non-existent thing as real. In fact, they say that the unconditioned can neither be apprehended by the senses (*pratyakṣa*) like *rūpa* (form), *vedanā* (feeling), etc., nor can they be known by inference (*anumāna*) from their activities, i.e., through the organs of sense.

(6) In the sixth argument, the Sautrāntikas become the questioners and inquire how, if *Nirodha* be a thing in itself, a genitive construction like ‘*duḥkhasya nirodhaḥ*’ can be justified. The Sautrāntikas understand by *Nirodha* (destruction of a thing) the “non-existence of a thing”, so also by the “destruction of duḥkha” they understand the “non-existence of duḥkha”. They do not admit the existence of any relation of cause and effect between two things existing by themselves. To this the Sarvāstivādins reply, that, according to them, destruction is a thing in itself. Nevertheless one can specify the relation between “destruction” and the “thing destroyed”, for, according to them, *nirodha*

<sup>1</sup> For which see *Kośa*, v. 25.



with reference to a thing indicates "obtaining possession" (prāpti) of the "destruction" at the moment when one is dispossessed of the thing. The Sautrāntikas would however inquire, what it is that determines or specifies the taking of possession of the "destruction".

(7) The seventh argument of the Sarvāstivādins is: if Nirvāṇa be non-existence, if it be only abhāva, what is that thing which is obtained by a bhikṣu in this life? The Sautrāntikas explain it by saying that a bhikṣu in Nirvāṇa attains a stage (āśraya) in which neither passion (kleśa) nor a new existence is possible.

(8) In the eighth argument the Sautrāntikas cite a text from the *Samyukta Āgama* (13.5) where Nirvāṇa is described as a disappearance (vyantibhāva), a decay (kṣaya), a destruction (nirodha), an appeasement (vyupaśama), a detachment (virāga), a passing away (astāngama) of duḥkha, and as a non-reproducer (apratisaṃdhi) of duḥkha, and infer therefrom that Nirvāṇa is abhāvamātra. The Sarvāstivādins do not accept this interpretation, stating that the passage refers to Nirvāṇa as a thing in itself, in which there is no appearance (aprādurabhāva) of duḥkha. The Sautrāntikas do not agree with the Sarvāstivādins regarding the force of the locative case used in the passage.

(9) The ninth argument put forward by the Sautrāntikas is that the simile of the flame used in the famous line, "Paṇḍitass' eva nibbānaṃ vimokkha cetaso ahu" (as the nirvāṇa of the flame, so is also the deliverance of thought)<sup>1</sup>, suggests only the passing away (atyaya) of the flame, and not a thing existing by itself.

(10) The tenth and the last argument advanced by the Sautrāntikas is that the Abhidharma, on which the Vaibhāṣikas rely most, contains the statement: "What are the *avastuka* dharmas? They are the *Asaṃskṛtas*". In this, the term "avastuka" signifies to the Sautrāntikas "unreal", "without true nature", but it is differently interpreted by the Vaibhāṣikas. According to them the term "vastu" is employed in five different senses, viz., (i) svabhāva vastu (a

<sup>1</sup> See above for a discussion of this passage.



thing in itself), (ii) ālambana vastu (object of knowledge), (iii) saṃyojanīya (cause of attachment), (iv) hetu (cause), and (v) parigraha (act of appropriation). In the present passage, vastu has been used in the sense of hetu; here “avastuka” signifies “that which has no cause”. The unconditioned, although real, being always devoid of any activity, have neither any cause which produces them nor any fruit produced by them.

*Kathāvatthu, Visuddhimagga AND Abhidharmakośa ANALYSED*

We have now before us the expositions of Nirvāṇa as found in the *Kathāvatthu*, *Visuddhimagga* and *Abhidharmakośa*. The last two also present a fairly good view of the Sautrāntika standpoint. These may be analysed thus:

(1) As against the Sautrāntika view that Nirvāṇa is unreal, that it is merely abhāva (absence) of kleśas, the mere destruction of rāga, etc., all the texts mentioned above maintain that Nirvāṇa has real existence, their grounds being that

(i) it is realisable if the right path be followed (*Vm.*); it is realised by the Āryas (*A.* and *Vm.*)<sup>1</sup>;

(ii) the arhats realize it in this life. It is known as the attainment of sopādiśeṣa-nirvāṇa-dhātu (*A.* and *Vm.*);

(iii) the existence of Nirvāṇa has been described by Buddha in statements like “atthi bhikkhave ajātam abhūtam, etc.” (*Vm.*), or, with reference to its subtlety or depth or excellence in statements like “duddasaṃ duranubodhaṃ, etc.” (*Vm. Tīkā*), “virāga is the best of all dharmas” (*A.*) or by mentioning it as one of the Four Truths (*A.*) or the ārammaṇa (basis) of knowledge (*Vm.*, *K.* and *A.*).

(2) As against the Sautrāntika view that Nirvāṇa, being only abhāva, cannot be eternal, existing by itself like rūpa (form) or aṇu (atom), or that it cannot be asaṃskṛta since it is the result of magga, the texts maintain that

(i) Nirvāṇa is eternal, exists by itself like rūpa or aṇu<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *A.* = *Abhidharmakośa*; *Vm.* = *Visuddhimagga*; and *K.* = *Kathāvatthu*.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Belvalkar, *Brahma Sūtra* (Poona), II, 2, pp. 61-64.



(*Vm.* and *A.*); does not require any ārammaṇa (basis) like jñāna for its origin (*Vm.* and *K.*), and is unconnected with citta (acetasika, cittavippayutta) (*Vm.*, *K.* and *A.*), but it should be distinguished from rūpa and aṇu by the fact that it is uncaused (*Vm.* and *A.*) and requires the practice of magga for its realisation (*Vm.*);

(ii) Nirvāṇa is eternal but not the parinibbuta puggala, i.e., individuality ceases in Nirvāṇa (*K.*); and that Nirvāṇa is one and not different for different Buddhas (*Vm.*)<sup>1</sup>;

(iii) Nirvāṇa is asaṃskṛta as it has no origin, no decay, and no change (*Vm.* and *A.*);

(iv) the āryāṣṭāṅgika-mārga leads only to the cessation of kleśas; nirvāṇa is not produced by mārga, but exists by itself eternally (*Vm.* and *A.*).

(3) The Sautrāntikas understand the comparison of Ākāśa and Nirvāṇa in the sense that as ākāśa is really the absence or non-cognition of any resistible thing so Nirvāṇa is also the absolute absence of kleśas. The texts comment on it as follows:—

Nirvāṇa is infinite, immeasurable and inexpressible like ākāśa (*Vm.*, *K.* and *A.*); it has a positive existence, but the kleśas work as an āvaraṇa (screen) to the vision of beings, and so when the mārga removes the kleśas it is visualised (*A.*). The attainment of Nirvāṇa means the possession of the Viśaṃyoga (disconnection) or Nirvāṇa (*A.*).

(4) To the question why if Nirvāṇa exists, Buddha did not define its nature (svarūpa), the texts answer that it is very subtle (*Vm.* and *A.*), so much so that even Buddha at first hesitated to preach it (*Vm.*).

(5) Buddhaghosa inclines towards the view that Nirvāṇa is inexpressible, indistinguishable, eternal and blissful. In the sopādiśeṣanirvāṇa, the Arhat obtains inwardly a vision of same and actually gets it when he enters into nirupādiśeṣa-nirvāṇa.

(6) Vasubandhu emphasises the fact that Nirvāṇa is still a dhātu, a dravya (a thing in itself) but endowed with all the qualities mentioned above. The atoms or ions com-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Dharmakāya of the Mahāyānists; see *ante*.



posing a being are continually changing, and ultimately, by the force of mārga which he has been following, the individual reaches the immaculate state and becomes indistinguishable from the eternal and immaculate elements called Nirvāṇa-dhātu. Professor Poussin, on the basis of the available descriptions of this Nirvāṇa-dhātu, prefers to find in it a perfectly blissful and eternal life while Professor Stcherbatsky, following the strict logic of the atomic theory, concludes that the Nirvāṇa-dhātu is "eternal death", or the Sāṃkhya's undifferentiated matter.

As to the difference of opinion between Buddhaghosa and Vasubandhu, it should be observed that Buddhaghosa is untrammelled by the atomic theory, the consistency of which has all along been maintained by Vasubandhu in his arguments. Buddhaghosa states unequivocally that Nirvāṇa transcends every conceivable form of existence (beyond all sattāvāsas or viññāṇaṭṭhitis), and is an infinite and inconceivable state. This looks very much like the metaphysical conception of the Vedāntic Brahman, though not strictly so, as has been pointed out by Profs. Poussin and Belvalkar.<sup>1</sup> But it is clearly not advaya brahman, for it involves the conception of innumerable beings having separate existences of their own and only losing their identity when they are parinibbuta-puggalas.

#### THE *Prajñāpāramitās* ON NIRVĀṆA

The conception of Nirvāṇa assumed a totally different form in the Mahāyānic works. We have seen that the *Saddharma Puṇḍarīka* understands by Nirvāṇa the realisation of the sameness of all dharmas. The sameness (samatā), as explained in the *Prajñāpāramitās* and the *Sūtrālaṅkāra*, means, from the standpoint of the highest reality (paramārthataḥ), the non-distinguishability between any two things and the impossibility of particularizing a thing. The *Prajñāpāramitās* develop this idea of sameness a little further and show that

<sup>1</sup> *Brahma Sūtra* (Poona, 1924), II. 2, p. 57; "Hīnayāna has not developed any special aptitude for metaphysical theories and logical subtleties." Cf. *Sribhāṣya*, ed. by Durgācaraṇa Sāṅkhya-Vedāntatīrtha, p. 176: Nirvikāra-svaparakāśa-caitanyamaya-brahma.



everything perceived or known in this world is really an illusion (māyā) to the unenlightened mind. So when any one speaks of Nirvāṇa or the attainment of Nirvāṇa, he imagines, because of imperfect vision, the existence of a man and his nirvāṇa, and thinks that the man after practising the disciplinary rules attains the ultimate state called Nirvāṇa<sup>1</sup>. In reality, all these are merely his fancies (parikalpanā). One of the similes to show this unreality runs thus: Suppose a magician (māyākāra) or his disciple, expert in performing magical feats, creates the five kinds of enjoyable things (pañca-kāmaguṇa) and shows himself as enjoying these things.<sup>2</sup> Does he, in fact, enjoy them? So also a Bodhisattva or Buddha speaks of the so-called worldly pleasures (kāmaguṇas), Bodhisattva practices, skandhas, (e.g. sila, samādhi, etc.), the eightfold path, Nirvāṇa, or Buddha. These, in fact, do not exist at all<sup>3</sup>; they are mere names invented to denote things, the existence of which is conceived by the unenlightened, e.g., something which has no real existence is called a sattva (being) or rūpa (form),<sup>4</sup> but sattva or rūpa is only a term, a mere designation. That which is a designation has no origin or decay; it is used only as a symbol; its interior, or exterior, or both cannot be perceived. The *Prajñāpāramitās* carry it further by stating that even the designation (nāmadheya) must not be taken as having any form of existence<sup>5</sup>. There being no such thing as entrance (āya) and exit (vyaya) of anything whatsoever, not excluding sarvadharmatathatā or Buddha, it should not be said that there is Arhat or Buddha<sup>6</sup>, or any kind of relation between them. If Buddha creates some māyāpuruṣas

<sup>1</sup> *Pañca*. (A.S.B.Ms.), leaf 399b: A bodhisattva does not seek Nirvāṇa because he "saṃsāraṃ saṃsārato na vikalpayati nirvāṇaṃ nirvāṇato na vikalpayati".

<sup>2</sup> *Sūta*., p. 117.

<sup>3</sup> *Sūta*., p. 432: Atyantayā bodhisattvo nopalabhyate; p. 613: Prakṛtiśūnyāḥ sarvadharmāḥ.

<sup>4</sup> See *Sūta*., pp. 325ff, for sattva may be put a man, a doer, form, eye, bodhisattva, etc.

<sup>5</sup> *Sūta*., p. 522: Nāmadheyam na sthitam na viṣṭitam nādhiṣṭhitam. Tat kasya hetoh? Avidyamānatvāt tasya nāmadheyasya.

<sup>6</sup> *Sūta*., p. 552.



(illusory men) and makes them pass through all the stages of sanctification and attain omniscience, no one inquires about the existence of the māyāpuruṣas, their practices or attainments.<sup>1</sup> Similarly we should not trouble ourselves with the definition of either a monk or his nirvāṇa. On ultimate analysis monk and nirvāṇa do not exist; they are hallucinations, and both being unreal (śūnya), the monk and nirvāṇa are the same in character. So we should remove all misconceptions about the world and make the realisation of advayam advaidhikāram (non-duality) of everything whatsoever as our aim.<sup>2</sup>

#### NĀGĀRJUNA ON NIRVĀṆA

Nāgārjuna also supports this conception but his arguments are those of an expert logician and philosopher. He takes into account the views of the Hīnayānists, mainly the Sarvāstivādins and shows the weak bases of their views. The Hīnayānists, he says, speak of two kinds of Nirvāṇa, sopādiśeṣa and nirupādiśeṣa, and think that Nirvāṇa is the nirodha (extinction) of kleśas (defiling elements) and skandhas (constituents) existing in a being. They wonder how the Mahāyānists can conceive Nirvāṇa if they think that everything is unreal (śūnya) without origin and decay. What is it then, from which Nirvāṇa confers release. Nāgārjuna answers: If kleśas (defiling elements) and skandhas (constituents) be elements existing by themselves, how can they be destroyed?<sup>3</sup> The Śūnyatāvādins do not seek a Nirvāṇa where there is an end of kleśas and skandhas. Their Nirvāṇa is

Aprahīṇam asamprāptam anucchinnaṃ aśāśvataṃ,

Aniruddham anutpannam etan nirvāṇam ucyate.

(Nirvāṇa is that which is neither discarded nor attained; it is neither a thing destroyed nor a thing eternal; it is

<sup>1</sup> *Sāta.*, pp. 886ff.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 825: Sarvākārajñatā advayā advaidhikārā sarvadharmā-bhāvasvabhāvatām upādāya.

<sup>3</sup> The arguments of Nāgārjuna are found in the *Mādhyamika Vṛtti*, Ch. XXV translated by Professor Stcherbatsky as an Appendix to his *Con. of N.* In places, however, there are differences between Stcherbatsky's interpretation and the one that is given here.



neither suppressed nor does it arise). Candrakīrti, in commenting upon this verse, says that it is not to be eradicated like *rāga* (passion) etc. nor to be attained like the fruits of a saintly life (e.g. *srotāpatti*, *sakṛdāgāmi*, etc.). It is not eternal like *asūnya* (real elements).<sup>1</sup> It is by its nature without origin and decay, and its *lakṣaṇa* (characteristic) is that it does not admit of description.<sup>2</sup> In such an indescribable thing, how can an imagination (*kalpanā*) of the existence of *kleśas* and *skandhas*, and their eradication through *Nirvāṇa* find a place? So long as those activities of our imagination continue to exist, there can be no *Nirvāṇa*. *Nirvāṇa* is realised only when all *prapañcas*, i.e., attempts at particularization or definition cease. To the argument of the *Sarvāstivādins* that even admitting the non-existence of *kleśas* and *skandhas* at the stage where *Nirvāṇa* is reached, it may be that they exist in *saṃsāra*, i.e., before the attainment of *Nirvāṇa*,—the *Mahāyānists* give the forcible reply that there is not the slightest difference between *Nirvāṇa* and *Samṣāra*. So, in fact, *Nirvāṇa* requires no process of eradication. *Nirvāṇa* is really the complete disappearance (*kṣaya*) of all figments of the imagination. The *kleśas*, *skandhas*, etc., the disappearance of which is generally supposed to be necessary in *Nirvāṇa*,<sup>3</sup> have, according to the *Mādhyamikas*, no real existence whatsoever. Those who cannot get rid of the conception of “I-ness” or “Mine-ness” usually assume the existence of non-existent things. The sufferings of those who are in a stage in which they recognize the existence and non-existence of things will never end. Candrakīrti includes in the category of such sufferers the schools of *Kaṇāda*, *Kapila*, etc. and also the *Vaibhāṣikas* who believe in the existence of real entities; he also includes the *Atheists* (*Nāstikas*<sup>4</sup>) who deny their existence, the *Sautrāntikas* who deny the existence of

<sup>1</sup> Prof. Stecherbatsky suggests in the footnote that *Asūnya*=*Nirvāṇa* of the *Hīnayānists*=*Pradhāna* of the *Sāṃkhya*.

<sup>2</sup> Prof. Stecherbatsky translates ‘*prapañca*’ by plurality and then sometimes even stretches this sense of the word.

<sup>3</sup> *M. Vr.*, p. 445.

<sup>4</sup> Prof. Stecherbatsky prefers to call the *Nāstikas*, *Materialists*.



the past, the future and the citta-viprayuktas<sup>1</sup> but admit that of all else, and the Yogācāras who do not believe in the existence of parikalpita (imaginary) things but admit the reality of the pariniṣpanna (the ultimate)—the pure consciousness (vijñaptimātratā).<sup>2</sup> Nāgārjuna says that Nirvāṇa does not consist in the eradication or destruction of anything. It is really the avoidance of all imagination (kalpanā) of eradication, destruction, etc. Just as a man imagines that he has taken poison and faints, though, in fact, the poison has not entered his stomach, so also a being in this world, not knowing really what the ego is, conceives of "I-ness" and "Mine-ness," and suffers on that account. Nirvāṇa is beyond the limits of existence (bhāva) and non-existence (abhāva). A being fancies that something exists and that Nirvāṇa is the end of it, while, in fact, that something does not exist and therefore there can be neither its continuance nor extinction. Nirvāṇa really consists in the avoidance of the conception that something exists.<sup>3</sup>

According to Nāgārjuna, there are some (referring to the Vaibhāṣikas, etc.) who contend that Nirvāṇa does exist, for it works as a bar to the current of passions (kleśas), deeds (karmas), and births (janmas) like a dam arresting the course of a stream, and that a thing which is non-existent cannot be an effective barrier like a dam. In reply to this it is argued (by the Sautrāntikas) that Nirvāṇa has been defined as the effacement (kṣaya) of desires together with pleasures (nandī) and passions (rāga). So what is mere extinction cannot have any existence. It is like the extinction of the flame of a lamp. This argument does not convince those who conceive Nirvāṇa as a real object, for, according to them, the extinction of desires happens in the Dharma called Nirvāṇa.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *M. Vr.*, pp. 444-5: Sautrāntikamate 'tītānāgatam śūnyam anyad aśūnyam, viprayuktā vijñaptiḥ śūnyā.

<sup>2</sup> *M. Vr.*, p. 445. In the enumeration of schools it will be observed that the Sthaviravādins have been omitted, as also the Vedāntists.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. the *Prajñāpāramitā* view, *ante*, pp. 185-6.

<sup>4</sup> This controversy is given also in the *Kośa*, see *ante*.



Nāgārjuna refutes the opinion that Nirvāṇa is a bhāva (real thing) on the following grounds :

(i) that a really existent entity like vijñāna (consciousness) must suffer decay and death which Nirvāṇa cannot, and therefore that which has no decay and death cannot be said to have any form of existence ;

(ii) that an existent entity like vijñāna is necessarily constituted (saṃskṛta) but Nirvāṇa is unconstituted (asaṃskṛta) and hence cannot have existence ;

(iii) that an existent entity requires for its origin a causal substratum (svakāraṇasāmagrī), but Nirvāṇa does not require any, for it must be without a substratum (anupādāya).

As against the opinion that Nirvāṇa is merely abhāva (non-existence), an opinion held by the Sautrāntikas, Nāgārjuna adduces the following reasons :

(i) Nirvāṇa is not what is said to be the absence of defiling element (kleśa), birth (janma), etc., for, that would make transitoriness (anityatā) of kleśa, janma, etc. the same as Nirvāṇa. Transitoriness is the absence of kleśa and janma and nothing else, and so if Nirvāṇa be the absence of kleśa and janma then it must be the same as transitoriness of kleśa and janma, and in that case no exertion would be required to attain Nirvāṇa—which is not admitted.

(ii) If Nirvāṇa be abhāva (non-existence), how can it be spoken of as being without any substratum and without any reference to a bhāva (existent thing)? For no question of substratum (upādāna) can arise in regard to a non-existent thing. Against this may be raised the objection that the son of a barren woman or the horn of a hare is also said to be an abhāva (absence) without any positive counterpart. Nāgārjuna meets this by saying that abhāva (non-existence) implies a change (anyathābhāva) undergone by a thing which is existent,<sup>1</sup> while the son of a barren woman or the horn of a hare is only imagination (kalpanā) without implying the existence of any object. As there can be no abhāva (absence) without a positive counterpart, so Nirvāṇa is not abhāva.

<sup>1</sup> M. Vr., Ch. XV, 5, p. 267.



Nāgārjuna now proceeds to state his conception of Nirvāṇa, which is neither bhāva nor abhāva. He says that coming and going, birth and death, are regarded sometimes as existing relatively, either antithetically like long and short, or as cause and effect like the lamp and its light, or the seed and its sprout. In both cases, they are shown to be a complex of causes and conditions. Everything whatsoever must therefore have a cause and a condition, but Nirvāṇa, in which birth and death have ceased, is uncaused and unconditioned and hence not produced (apavṛtti). Existence or non-existence cannot be predicated of what is not produced; so Nirvāṇa is neither existence nor non-existence. Those (*i.e.*, the Sarvāstivādins and the Sthaviras) who believe in the transmigration of constituents (saṃskāras) state that the group of constituents has for origin and decay a causal basis. When there is no causal basis, the group is no longer produced (apavartamāna). Then it is called Nirvāṇa. Those (*i.e.*, the Sāṃmitīyas) who believe in the transmigration of pudgala (personality) say that permanence (nityatva) or impermanence (anityatva) cannot be predicated of personality. Its coming and going happen through its corresponding upādāna (substratum) and are dependent on it. When the substratum of this personality ceases to exist, then it is called Nirvāṇa. Nāgārjuna contends that the presence (bhāva) and absence (abhāva) of the mere non-appearance (apavṛttimātrakam) of constituents (saṃskāras) or the personality (pudgala) cannot be conceived; similarly the existence (bhāva) and non-existence (abhāva) of Nirvāṇa cannot be affirmed. In support of his contention he quotes the saying of Buddha that desire for both existence (bhāva) and non-existence (vibhava) should be given up, and points out that Buddha did not say that desire for Nirvāṇa should be given up. If Nirvāṇa has the nature of existence (bhāvarūpa) or the nature of non-existence (abhāvarūpa), then, according to Buddha, it must be given up; so existence and non-existence cannot be predicated of Nirvāṇa.

There are again some (*i.e.*, the Vaibhāṣikas) who contend that Nirvāṇa is both existence (bhāva) and non-existence (abhāva). It is abhāva because in it there is absence of



passion, birth, etc. It is bhāva because it exists by itself. Nāgārjuna refutes this on four grounds, saying that Nirvāṇa cannot be both bhāva and abhāva, for, in that case,

(i) Mokṣa (deliverance) would be bhāva and abhāva, and this would mean that the presence of saṃskāras as well as their extinction represents deliverance (mokṣa). But the former cannot be mokṣa, and therefore Nirvāṇa is not both bhāva and abhāva.

(ii) Nirvāṇa would be a dependent existence, for both bhāva and abhāva exist or arise through cause and condition. But as it is not so dependent, it is without any substratum.

(iii) Nirvāṇa would be caused and conditioned (saṃskṛta), for bhāva and abhāva cannot but be uncaused and unconditioned.

(iv) In Nirvāṇa, both bhāva and abhāva would exist together but this is impossible, for light and darkness cannot be simultaneously present at the same place. Hence Nirvāṇa cannot be both bhāva and abhāva.

Lastly, Nāgārjuna takes up the question whether Nirvāṇa is the negation of both bhāva and abhāva and shows that it cannot be so by two arguments:

(i) If bhāva and abhāva could have been realized, the negation of them would have been conceived as Nirvāṇa but as what is really bhāva and abhāva is not known, it is inconsistent to describe Nirvāṇa by their negation.

(ii) If it be imagined that Nirvāṇa is neither not-bhāva nor not-abhāva, it is impossible to ascertain the knower of such Nirvāṇa. If it be admitted that beings in the phenomenal world cognize it, it may be asked whether they cognize it empirically by vijñāna (consciousness) or metaphysically by jñāna (knowledge). Vijñāna (empirical consciousness) needs signs (nimitta) for cognition but Nirvāṇa is animitta (signless). Jñāna (transcendental knowledge) has śūnyatā (essencelessness) as its basis. It is originless (anutpāda) and formless (arūpa). How then with the help of this knowledge, which is indefinable, and escapes every attempt at clear expression, can it be cognized definitely that Nirvāṇa is neither not-bhāva nor not-abhāva? What cannot be



cognized or understood (lit. grasped) cannot be said to have existence.

Nāgārjuna then points out that the fourteen problems, which Buddha did not think worth answering (*avyākṛtaṃ*),<sup>1</sup> prove only the non-existence of things in reality and the identity of *samsāra* and *nirvāṇa*.

If everything be non-existent some may question, why it is said that Buddha preached his dharma, and for whose benefit he preached it. Nāgārjuna answers this question by saying that the *Mādhyamikas* define *Nirvāṇa* as the cessation (*upaśama*), and of not being in process (*apavṛtti*) of *prapañca* (expressibility) and *nimitta* (signs) and as a state the nature of which is *upaśānta* (quiet) and *śiva* (peaceful).<sup>2</sup> When Buddha is in *Nirvāṇa* (a state as described above), how can he be expected to have preached doctrines to men and gods? In the *Tathāgataguhyā-sūtra* it is said that not a single word was uttered by Buddha between the attainment of *bodhi* and *mahāparinirvāṇa*,<sup>3</sup> but people, according to their individual tendencies and aims of life, conceive Buddha as giving discourses.

#### CONCLUSION OF THE *Prajñāpāramitās* AND *Madhyamakakārikā*

Nāgārjuna, we see, leads us through a maze of arguments to the same conclusion that the *Prajñāpāramitās* have reached by every possible negation. Candrakīrti quotes a stanza from the *Prajñāpāramitā* itself in support of Nāgārjuna's contention that *Nirvāṇa* or the Truth is the inexpressible absolute and is different from the *Tathatā* or *Tathā-*

<sup>1</sup> See, e.g., *Dīgha*, I, pp. 187 ff.; *M.Vr.*, p. 536.

<sup>2</sup> *M. Vr.*, p. 538:

Prapañcopaśama=	vācām apravṛttiḥ	Śiva=cittasya apravṛttiḥ
„	=kleśānām apravṛttiḥ	„ =janmano apravṛttiḥ
„	=kleśaprahāṇena	„ =niravaśeṣa-
		vāśanāprahāṇena
„	=jñeyānupalabdhyā	„ =jñānānupalabdhyā.

<sup>3</sup> *M. Vr.*, p. 539: *Avāca'nakṣarāḥ sarvaśūnyāḥ śāntādinirmalāḥ,*

*Ya evaṃ jānāti dharmān kumāro buddha socyate.*

Cf. *Laṅkā.*, p. 194: *Uktaṃ deśanāpāṭhe mayānyais ca buddha-bodhisattvair yathaikam apyākṣaram tathāgatā nodāharanti na pratyāharanti ti.*



gata, descriptions of which are to be found in Mahāyānic works. The stanza runs thus:

Tathāgato hi pratibimbabhūtaḥ  
kuśalasya dharmasya anāsravasya,  
Naivātra tathatā na tathāgato 'sti  
bimbaṃ ca samdrśyati sarvaloke.<sup>1</sup>

[Tathāgata is an image of good and pure dharma, there is (in reality) no Tathatā or Tathāgata; only images are visible in all the worlds.]

In connection with the discussion on the existence and non-existence of saṃskāras, Nāgārjuna likewise points out that if Tathatā be equated with 'tathābhāvo 'vikāritvaṃ sadaiva sthāyitā' (sameness, changelessness and ever-existence),<sup>2</sup> as is done by the Yogācārins, then he would also assert that that Tathatā is non-existent. By all these negations Nāgārjuna only tries to show that the difference between the Mādhyamikas and the Yogācārins<sup>3</sup> consists in the fact that the former, unlike the latter, do not enter into the question of existence and non-existence of the Reality. Candrakīrti, however, apprehends that such a denial of the existence of Buddha or Tathāgata might lead people to the belief that Nāgārjuna preached pure and simple negativism; so he says, "we do not assert the non-existence (nāstitva) in every way of the inexpressible Tathāgata, for in that case we should be guilty of apavāda (denial)".<sup>4</sup> The Mādhyamikas assert that the Reality is beyond determination, i.e., statements like śūnya, aśūnya, both śūnya and aśūnya or not both śūnya and aśūnya cannot be made about it. These statements are used in the texts for the sake of prajñapti (communication). We should bear in mind that whenever Nāgārjuna negatives the existence of Tathatā or Tathāgata or any other synonym of it, he attributes to it the sense commonly accepted by the imperfect bodhisattvas

<sup>1</sup> *M. Vr.*, pp. 449, 540.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 265.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 275: Madhyamakadarśana evāstitva-nāstitva-dvaya-darśanasyāprasaṅgo na Vijñānavādīdarśanādiṣviti vijñeyam.

<sup>4</sup> *M. Vr.*, p. 443: Na ca vyaṃ sarvathāiva niṣprapañcānāṃ tathāgatānāṃ nāstitvaṃ brūmo yad asmākaṃ tad apavādakṛto doṣaḥ syāt.



or the Yogācārins. So, in fact, Nāgārjuna does not teach pure and simple negativism. But it should be remembered that there were among the followers of Nāgārjuna some who interpreted Nāgārjuna's principle as absolute nihilism and we may regard Bhāvaviveka as a prominent exponent of this view. But from this fact it does not follow that Nāgārjuna himself or his followers in general denied a supreme and ineffable reality, Tathatā or Śūnyatā and at least such negativism is not supported by the *Mahāprajñāpāramitāsāstra* of Nāgārjuna. The object of the *Prajñāpāramitās* as well as of the *Mādhyamakakārikā* is to establish a Unity corresponding to the Vedāntic Absolute. The most characteristic mark, however, of the Vedāntic Absolute is that it is of the nature of pure intelligence (cit) and bliss (ānanda). In the Unity of Nāgārjuna bliss at least is totally absent. Śānta and śiva are the two terms which find place in Nāgārjuna's conception of the Reality; hence it would be assuming too much to find in his conception a full-fledged Vedāntic Brahman—an all-pervading 'I' which Buddha categorically denies.<sup>1</sup> According to Dr. Das Gupta, it approaches more the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika conception of mukti, i.e., a state entirely devoid of quality of any sort, either abstract or attributive, in which "the self remains in itself in its own purity, unassociated with pleasure, pain, knowledge, willing, etc."<sup>2</sup> The Mādhyamika reality or Nirvāṇa may well, therefore, be said to have a resemblance to the impersonal aspect of the Vedāntic Brahman but not to its other aspects.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Beal, *Catena etc.*, pp. 175ff (from Chinese sources); *Laṅkā.*, p. 78 in connection with Tathāgatagarbha; Reischauer, *Studies in Japanese Buddhism* (1925), p. 63: "Nothing is more striking than the similarities between the Vedānta philosophy and the speculations of Mahāyāna Buddhism; the one is as characteristically metaphysical in its mould as the other".

<sup>2</sup> Das Gupta, *Ind. Phil.*, p. 366 quoting *Nyāyamañjarī*, pp. 499ff.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Dr. Barnett's remarks in his Intro. to the *Path of Light*, pp. 29-30: "The Vedāntic metaphysicians could find no term to predicate of Brahman, the absolute, transcendental Reality but 'nay, nay'! And it is rather in this sense that we should interpret the negations of the Mahāyāna philosophers".



THE *Laṅkāvatāra* ON NIRVĀṆA

We conclude our examination of Nirvāṇa by ascertaining what the *Laṅkāvatāra*, an authoritative and early text of the Yogācārins, says about it. At the outset it may be said that the Yogācārins agreed with the Mādhyamikas so far as the unreality of the things of this world and the non-duality (advaya)<sup>1</sup> of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa is concerned. The Mādhyamikas were not prepared to establish any relation between the phenomenal world and the absolute except by remarking that from time immemorial beings have been subject to delusion, rendering them unable to realise the Truth unless and until they become Buddhas, after going through the processes prescribed in Mahāyāna works. The Yogācārins differed from the Mādhyamikas in attempting to find a relation between the absolute and the individual, and in doing so they asserted that there exists only citta (citta-mātra) or vijñāna (vijñānamātra).<sup>2</sup> This citta or vijñāna, better known as Ālaya-vijñāna (store of consciousness, the substratum of saṃsāra), though originally pure, becomes polluted by delusions and dichotomizes itself into me and not-me, subject and object, the former becoming mind (manas) and the latter the external world. So, according to the Yogācārins, Nirvāṇa consists in the ceasing of the mind to dichotomize and in realising that there exists only citta and that the phenomenal world is only a delusion of the citta. The *Laṅkāvatāra* says that Nirvāṇa consists in the removal of the imagining intellect (vikalpasya manovijñānasya vyāvṛttir nirvāṇam ity ucyate),<sup>3</sup> the source of seven vijñānas and that it is not any one of the following four as conceived by the heretics:<sup>4</sup>

- (i) absence of any real existence (bhāvasvabhāvābhāva);
- (ii) absence of the various forms of existence (lakṣaṇa-vicitra-bhāvābhāva);
- (iii) realisation of the absence of the existence of one's own signs (svalakṣaṇabhāvābhāvābodha); and

<sup>1</sup> Cf. e.g. *Laṅkā.*, p. 76; *M. Vr.*, p. 537.

<sup>2</sup> For criticism of this, see *M. Vr.*, pp. 274ff.

<sup>3</sup> *Laṅkā.*, p. 126.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*



(iv) destruction of the chain of continuity of the general characteristics (svasāmānyalakṣaṇa-saṃtati-prabandha-vyuccheda)<sup>1</sup>.

According to the *Laṅkāvatāra*,<sup>2</sup> Nirvāṇa is the transformation (parāvṛtti) of vijñānas, mind, etc. It is devoid of the mental distinctions of existence and non-existence, and of eternal and non-eternal. It is not eternal, because it has no distinct generic characteristics, and it is not non-eternal because it can be realized by saints (āryas). It resembles neither death nor destruction.<sup>3</sup>

The *Laṅkāvatāra* then proceeds to elucidate its position by enumerating the different conceptions of Nirvāṇa current among the non-Yogācārins, and remarks in a general way that all these conceptions are defective, because they fall under either of the two extremes of 'is' and 'is not'<sup>4</sup>. The conception of Nirvāṇa mentioned last among the non-Yogācāra conceptions, however, appears to be Mahāyānic. It runs thus: There are some who declare that Nirvāṇa is the removal (vyāvṛtti) of citta, manas and manovijñāna by passing from one bhūmi to another till the attainment of the Tathāgatabhūmi, and practice of the samādhi of Māyā, etc., appertaining thereto by (i) realising that everything is a fancy of one's own mind, (ii) not occupying oneself with the existence and non-existence of external things, (iii) ascertaining the true nature (yathābhūta) of things, (iv) non-perceiving subject and object without being deluded by the two extremes which follow from one's own thought-constructions, (v) realising the ineffectiveness of having recourse to proofs, (vi) knowing that the truth is a matter only of self-realisation, (vii) comprehending two nairātmyas, and (viii) removing the two kinds of kleśas (intellectual and habitual) and the two screens (āvaraṇas: kleśa and jñeya). The various conceptions which non-Buddhists hold in regard to Nirvāṇa are their imaginations. Mokṣa (emancipation) and mokṣopāya (means of emancipation), about which they

<sup>1</sup> *Laṅkā.*, p. 157: The Śrāvakas are referred to as svasāmānya-lakṣaṇapātitaśayābhiniṣṭāḥ.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 98-9.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 66.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 182-7: for a summary see *E.B.*, IV, pp. 226ff.



speak, do not really exist but the teachers have *vikalpa* (thought-construction) about them and think of the action and the actor, existence (*sat*) and non-existence (*asat*), and busy themselves in *jalpa* (useless talks) and *prapañca* (diffuse talks). Just as forms in a mirror are seen but do not exist there, so also in the mirror of *vāsanā*<sup>1</sup> foolish people see the *citta* as twofold (*dvidhā*)<sup>2</sup>. Not knowing *cittadṛśya* (*citta*-image) truly, the ignorant form *vikalpas* of the seen and the seer, whereas in fact there is only one *citta*, devoid of *lakṣya* and *lakṣaṇa* (percipient and percept). The *Laṅkāvatāra* then goes into details of this exposition, asserting that Tathāgata or Buddha is beyond predications and cannot be said to be made (*kṛtaka*) or unmade (*akṛtaka*), cause or effect, for such predication would be doubly faulty. If the Tathāgata be *kṛtaka*, he would be *anitya* and identical with all actions, which are by nature impermanent, and if he be *akṛtaka*, he would be non-existent,<sup>3</sup> and the merits so far collected by him become useless, and he becomes non-existent as a sky-flower. So the Tathāgata should be regarded as beyond four-fold limitations and hence beyond proofs, and is only to be realised within one's own self. When Buddha speaks about things as *nirātma*, he refers to phenomenal things and not to the Tathāgata. A Tathāgata is neither the same nor different from the *skandhas*; hence he is neither *nitya* nor *anitya*. Similarly he is not the same nor different from *mokṣa*. In this way, if no statement can be made about the Tathāgata, and if he is beyond proofs, he turns into a word without any origin and destruction and can be equated with *ākāśa*, having nothing to rest upon (*nirālamba*) and beyond *prapañca*.<sup>4</sup> Though the Tathāgata is called *Anutpāda-anirodha*, it must not be supposed that 'Tathāgata' means only absence (*abhāva*) of

<sup>1</sup> *Vāsanā*=knowledge derived from memory=present consciousness of past perceptions, or an impression remaining unconsciously in the mind from past good or evil actions and hence producing pleasure and pain (*samskāra*). See Monier Williams' *Dict.* sv. *Vāsanā*.

<sup>2</sup> *Laṅkā.*, p. 182.

<sup>3</sup> *Alabdhatmakāḥ*=na lakṣaṇataḥ kalpyāḥ, see *Laṅkā.*, p. 19.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *M.Vj.*, p. 536.



something;<sup>1</sup> this Anutpāda-anirodha is really the name of the Manomaya-dharmakāya<sup>2</sup> (=Svasambhogakāya) and is not in fact the Reality, the real Tathāgata (=Dharmakāya).

POINTS OF AGREEMENT AND DIFFERENCE RE. NIRVĀṆA IN HĪNAYĀNIC AND MAHĀYĀNIC WORKS

Without going into the discussion on the conception of Nirvāṇa which Buddha had in his mind, and which is to be found in the Piṭakas—a topic ably discussed in many works, the latest of which is Professor La Vallée Poussin's *Nirvāṇa*—we shall compare here the conceptions as found in the *Kathāvatthu*, *Visuddhimagga* and *Abhidharmakośa* on the one hand, and the *Prajñāpāramitā*, *Mādhyamika Vṛtti*, and *Laṅkāvatāra* on the other.

All these texts agree in regard to the following points:—

(i) Nirvāṇa is inexpressible (niṣprapañca); it is unconstituted, and has no origin, no decay and no change.

(ii) It is to be realised only within one's own self—the pratyātmavedya of the Yogācārins and the paccattaṃ vedittabbaṃ (viññūhi) of the Hinayānists.

(iii) It is not abhāva (absence of anything) as maintained by the Sautrāntikas.

(iv) It is one and the same for all Buddhas, past, present and future.

(v) Mārga leads to Nirvāṇa.

(vi) Individuality ceases in Nirvāṇa.

(vii) The Hinayānists, in agreement with the Mahāyānists, hold that Buddhas possess extraordinary powers and knowledge, far superior to the Arhats. But they do not consider that the Nirvāṇa attained by Buddha is different from that attained by the Arhat.<sup>3</sup> They thus object to the assertion of the Mahāyānists that the Nirvāṇa of the Arhats is a lower and not a perfect state.

<sup>1</sup> *Laṅkā.*, p. 191.

<sup>2</sup> See *ante*, p. 122.

<sup>3</sup> *Jāt.*, I, Dīpaṅkara Buddha is said to have attained anupādisesa-nibbānadhātu.



(viii) Vimukti (freedom) from afflictions (kleśa) as an aspect of Nirvāṇa is the same for Arhats and Buddhas.<sup>1</sup>

The points of difference regarding the conception of Nirvāṇa as found in the works mentioned above are :—

(i) The *K.*, *V.* and *A.*<sup>2</sup> mention that Nirvāṇa is existing, eternal (nitya), blissful (sukha) and pure (śuci). The Yogācārins subscribe to this statement when they identify Apratiṣṭhita Nirvāṇa with Dharmakāya.<sup>3</sup> Strictly speaking both the Mādhyamikas and the Yogācārins do not predicate of Nirvāṇa anything like eternal or non-eternal (nitya or anitya), blissful or without bliss (sukha or asukha), pure or impure (śuci or aśuci), for Nirvāṇa to them is beyond all predication and hence cannot be called nitya, anitya and so forth.

The Mahāyānists following the warning of Buddha against the two extremes of śāśvata and uccheda decline to apply the predications to everything, including Nirvāṇa, but the *K.* and *V.* state that Buddha's warning refers only to the conception of soul, and not to Nirvāṇa.

(ii) The *K.*, *V.* and *A.* consider that Nirvāṇa is a thing to be acquired (prāptam) while the *M.* and *L.*<sup>4</sup> consider it to be unobtainable (asamprāptam).

(iii) The *K.* and *V.* maintain that Nirvāṇa forms an āram-maṇa (basis) for meditation and knowledge of monks. The *M.* and *L.* do not distinguish between Nirvāṇa and the monk, knowable and the knower, object and the subject.

(iv) The *K.*, *V.* and *A.* define Nirvāṇa as a lokottara (transcendental) state, and as really the highest possible state conceivable by them.

The *L.* and *M.* recognise a state higher than lokottara (*L.* calls it lokottaratama) and identify it with Nirvāṇa, remarking that in this state sarvajñatā (omniscience) is obtained—a state unattainable by the Hīnayānists.

The Yogācārins are of opinion that the Hīnayānists attain

<sup>1</sup> *Sūtrā.*, p. 36.

<sup>2</sup> *K.* stands for *Kathāvatthu*; *V.* for *Visuddhimagga*; and *A.* for *Abhidharmakośa*.

<sup>3</sup> Suzuki, *Outlines of Mahāyāna Buddhism*, p. 354.

<sup>4</sup> *M.* stands for *Mādhyamika Vṛtti* and *L.* for *Laṅkāvatāra*.



only Vimuktikāya or Mokṣa, while the Mahāyānists attain Dharmakāya and Sarvajñatva. The Hīnayānists subscribe to this view, for, according to them, Buddha is far superior in knowledge and powers to an Arhat and is omniscient while an Arhat is not.

(v) The Hīnayānists know only two forms of Nirvāṇa, sopādiśeṣa and nirupādiśeṣa, or pratisaṃkhyā and apratisaṃkhyā. The Yogācārins add to them Prakṛtisuddha nirvāṇa<sup>1</sup> and Apratiṣṭhita nirvāṇa.<sup>2</sup>

(vi) The Mādhyamikas consider that Nirvāṇa is the impersonal absolute immanent in nature, and the only reality,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *M. Vr.*, p. 541; atyantaparinirvṛta.

<sup>2</sup> The Apratiṣṭhita Nirvāṇa is the state of one who after obtaining sopādisesa-nibbānadhātu develops maitrī, benevolence or charity for the suffering millions and chooses not to let himself automatically pass, as he would otherwise, to anupādisesanibbāna-dhātu [Cf. *Pañca. (A.S.B.ms.)*, leaf 157a : Śrāvakā nirupadhiśeṣanirvāṇadhātau pratiṣṭhitāḥ]. He is then said to be possessed of Nirvāṇa tinged with charity or benevolence. The *Sūtrālaṅkāra* (pp. 126-7) puts it very clearly: The Śrāvakas and Pratyekabuddhas, being devoid of love, fix their minds on Nirvāṇa, consisting in the cessation of all misery. The Bodhisattvas, however, being full of compassion, do not like to fix their minds on Nirvāṇa: hence they are said to be in the Apratiṣṭhita Nirvāṇa. It will be noted that the Arhats are not entitled to seek the Apratiṣṭhita Nirvāṇa; they pass directly from sopadhiśeṣa to nirupadhiśeṣa-nirvāṇadhātu. The Apratiṣṭhita Nirvāṇa can be obtained by Buddhas only, and hence it is a state superior to that of the Arhats. The *Vijñaptimātratā* adds that Buddhas in the Apratiṣṭhita Nirvāṇa rise above the idea of Saṃsāra and Nirvāṇa (cf. *Sūtrālaṅkāra*, p. 36); hence Śākyamuni was not really influenced by love or charity after the attainment of Nirvāṇa. The Hīnayānists conceive him as one without love (cf. *Milindapañha*, p. 160: vigatam tathāgatassa pemaṃ vigato sineho), though in fact, they repeatedly mention that he preached the Truth out of compassion for the innumerable suffering beings (lokānukampāya bahujanahitāya sukhāya). Compassion presupposes the existence of love, which may be, and in fact in the case of Buddha (but not of Bodhisattvas) was purely unselfish and, as the Mahāyānists say, devoid of kleśa. For a detailed treatment of the Apratiṣṭhita Nirvāṇa see Masuda, *Die individualistische Idealismus der Yogācāra Schule*, pp. 49 f.; Stcherbatsky, *Con. of N.*, pp. 185, 245-6; Lévi, *Mahāyāna Sūtrālaṅkāra*, ii, pp. 21, 27; Keith, *B. Phil.*, pp. 257-8; *Bodhic.*, p. 75; *Vijñaptimātratā*, x, pp. 99 (ed. of Saeki Kiokuga).



everything else being mere thought-construction. It appears like the Absolute of the Vedānta, but lacks the *cit* (consciousness) and *ānanda* (bliss) of the latter.

From this it follows that there is the *dharma-samatā* or the sameness of all things, even of *nirvāṇa* and *samsāra*. These are related to each other as the sea and the waves.

(vii) The Mādhyamikas hold with the Yogācārins that *Nirvāṇa* is *advaya* (non-dual), *i.e.*, in it there is no duality of subject and object, or positive and negative; and that all worldly things are mere illusions.

(viii) The Mahāyānists conceive two 'screens' called *klesāvaraṇa* and *jñeyāvaraṇa*<sup>1</sup> which operate as hindrances to the attainment of *Nirvāṇa*. They hold that the Hīnayānists can get rid of only the *klesāvaraṇa*, while they themselves get rid of both.

#### CONCLUSION

The agreements and disagreements in the accounts of *Nirvāṇa*, as noticed above, point to the following conclusions:

The Hīnayānic *Nirvāṇa*, *i.e.*, the *Nirvāṇa* as described in the literature of the Theravāda school, clearly refers to a Unity eternally existing beyond the three worlds (*Kāma*, *Rūpa* and *Arūpa dhātus*). It is infinite, inexpressible, unborn, and undecaying. It is homogeneous (*ekarasa*) and knows no individuality. In it, all discriminations or dichotomy cease. Many of the aspects of *Ākāśa* (space) and the ocean bear comparison with those of *Nirvāṇa*.

Every being is a conglomeration of elements, which can be classified under the five heads, *rūpa*, *vedanā*, *saññā*, *saṅkhārā* and *viññāṇa*; hence one being is not essentially different from another, an ordinary man is not different from a perfected saint. But if the nature and proportion of each of the five constituents existing in an individual be taken into account, then one being is different from another, an ordinary man is different from a perfected saint. It is in this way that the Buddhist saying '*n'eva so na ca añño*' (neither the same nor different) is explained.

<sup>1</sup> For details, see *ante*. Also *Lankā.*, pp. 97, 241.



The combination of elements is the outcome of Karma (past deeds) and is happening every moment (*kṣaṇika*), implying that the disintegration of elements always precedes it. The elements in a combined state pass as an individual, and from time immemorial he labours under the misconception of a self and of things relating to a self. His vision being distorted or obscured by ignorance of the truth he cannot perceive the momentary combination and disintegration of elements. On the other hand, he is subject to an inclination for them. A perfect man with his vision cleared by the Buddhistic practices and culture realises the real state of things, *viz.*, that an individual consists of the five elements and does not possess a permanent and unchanging entity called soul.

The elements, combined under the force of karma, pass as an individual, who becomes deluded by misconceptions. He weaves a net of fancies around himself and believes he is related in some way or other to things or individuals. Because of such illusions he experiences endless sufferings, or according to the Mahāyānists, thinks of himself as suffering, on account of his supposed separation from people or things near and dear to him, or through supposed disorders or derangements of his mental and physical system.

It is for these deluded so-called individuals that Buddhism prescribes the eightfold path. By following it an individual ultimately realises the transitoriness of things, to which he has hitherto attributed some form of existence, and finds that the elements, by which he thought himself constituted, are ultimately not constituents peculiar to him but common to all other so-called beings. He is then said to have attained Nirvāṇa, *i.e.*, a mental state in which he can no longer distinguish himself as an individual different from the infinite elements constituting the universe. In other words, all individuality ends in it. In that state of Nirvāṇa Gautama Buddha is not different from Śāriputra—all are one and the same.

The Mahāyānic conception of Nirvāṇa is completely different from the Hinayānic. The fundamental point of difference is that the Mahāyānists deny the existence of elements



altogether. They do not know of any other reality but the truth, the Dharmakāya or Dharmadhātu. Many of the aspects of their conception are brought out by the various terms used in Mahāyānic works. For instance, when Nirvāṇa is equated with śūnyatā, the implication is that all things which are ordinarily supposed to exist are really non-existent just as the mirage has no substantiality whatever, e.g., the pṛthivī-dhātu is void (śūnya) of real origination, destruction, or existence in reality.<sup>1</sup> When it is equated with Tathatā or Dharmatā, the implication is that all things of this world are essentially of the same nature, void of any name or substratum.<sup>2</sup> It is that which is neither existence nor non-existence.<sup>3</sup> Śūnyatā represents the negative and Tathatā the positive aspects of the Truth. When it is called bhūtakoti (true limit), it is implied that on analysis of dharmas, which are false designations, one arrives finally at the Reality, beyond which it is impossible to pass and which alone is true. Some of the other expressions which are often used as synonyms of Nirvāṇa are,—avitathatā (not untruth); ananyatathatā (unique); aviparyāsatathatā (irreversible); paramārtha (the highest truth), tattva (the essence); acintya-dhātu (incomprehensible substance), dharmadhātu (totality of things), dharmasthiti (substratum of things); suprasānta (perfectly calm, unruffled by origination or destruction); advaya and advaidhikāra (non-separable and non-divisible).<sup>4</sup>

The Mahāyānists hold that all beings other than Buddhas are under delusions, the nature of which varies according to their spiritual advancement. An ordinary man is as much under a delusion that he has a son or property as the Hīnayānic saints, the Arhats, who think that they have attained Nirvāṇa, a state of perfect rest and happiness, and have gone beyond the three worlds. The contention of the Mahāyānists is that the only reality is Nirvāṇa or Dharmadhātu, everything else being a delusion of the mind. The

<sup>1</sup> *Sīkṣā.*, p. 246.

<sup>2</sup> *Laṅkā.*, p. 226.

<sup>3</sup> *Sīkṣā.*, p. 263.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *Samyutta*, II, pp. 25ff; "Iti kho, bhikkhave, yā tatra tathatā avitathatā anaññatathatā idapaccayatā, ayam vuccati, bhikkhave, paṭiccasamuppādo ti. For explanation of the words in italics, see *Vis. M.*, p. 518.



moment an individual realises that he is the Reality, that Samsāra is identical with Nirvāṇa, he becomes perfect, *i.e.*, a Buddha. One must eradicate from his mind the conception not only of his own individuality but also of the substantiality of anything whatsoever perceived or cognized by him. When a being attains a state of mind, in which he cannot distinguish himself from any other thing of the world or from the Absolute, he is said to attain Nirvāṇa in the Mahāyānic sense.





#### (d). The Doctrine of Truths

An important point of difference between Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna pointed out by the *Saddharma-Puṇḍarīka* is that, according to the former, a being, by comprehending the Āryasatyas including the Pratītyasamutpāda, attains Nirvāṇa, i.e., he passes from saṃsāra to nirvāṇa, from a laukika to lokottara state; while, according to the latter, a being, by comprehending the fact that there is no difference between saṃsāra and nirvāṇa, that the world has only a relative existence (pratītyasamutpanna) and that it is unreal but appears real to a deluded mind, realises the true Nirvāṇa, which is nothing but the Śūnyatā or Tathatā, the absolute principle underlying the universe. The conceptions of the Reality being so wide apart, the Hīnayānists and the Mahāyānists look upon everything including the Buddhistic practices from two quite different angles of vision. To the Hīnayānists, the Āryasatyas and the Pratītyasamutpāda are real and hence belong to the domain of the highest truth (*paramattha* and not *sammuti*), while to the Mahāyānists, they are unreal and belong to the domain of convention (*saṃvṛti* or *parikalpita-paratantra*). The Mahāyānists, however, could not do away with the four truths and the formula of the chain of causation, for, they held that beings, deluded as they are, should at the beginning try to comprehend the Pudgala-śūnyatā through them. In consonance with their conception of the Reality, the Mahāyānists held that Buddha had two forms of teaching, conventional and transcendental, and that whatever he said about the Āryasatyas or Pratītyasamutpāda were conventional, his real teaching being Śūnyatā or Tathatā, which could not be imparted by one to another and could be realised only within one's own self. Before we enter into the discussion about his two forms of teaching, let us see what the Āryasatyas and the Pratītyasamutpāda are.



## THE ĀRYASATYAS

The Āryasatyas, as commonly known, are *dukkha* (misery), *samudaya* (origin of misery), *nirodha* (cessation of misery) and *magga* (means of the cessation of misery). The underlying teaching of these four truths is that they are to be treated as formulæ for application to everything perceived. That these four truths constitute merely a formula and not a doctrine has been brought out very clearly in many Buddhist texts. In the *Majjhima Nikāya*<sup>1</sup> while giving an exposition of what the right view (*sammādiṭṭhi*) is according to the Buddhists, Sāriputta takes up, for instance, *āhāra* (food), *dukkha* (misery), *jarāmaraṇa* (old age and death), *taṇhā* (desire), *nāmarūpa* (name and form) and *avijjā* (ignorance) and applies to each of them the fourfold formula, examining it in this way: Take up for consideration a material or an immaterial thing. Ascertain its origin. Inquire how it decays. In pursuance of this method Sāriputta defines *Sammādiṭṭhi* through *āhāra* thus: One who knows *āhāra* (food), *āhārasamudaya* (how food originates), *āhāra-nirodha* (how food decays) and *āhāranirodhagāminipaṭipadā* (the way in which the decay of food happens) possesses *Sammādiṭṭhi*. The first truth relates to *Āhāra* which, in the Buddhist philosophy, is of four kinds.<sup>2</sup> The second truth is *āhārasamudaya*, *i.e.*, *āhāra* comes into existence on account of *taṇhā*. The third truth is *āhāranirodha*, *i.e.*, the ceasing of *āhāra* when the *taṇhā* is extinct. The fourth truth is the way in which *āhāra* ceases; it happens by the practice of the eightfold path, *viz.*, *sammā diṭṭhi*, *saṅkappa*, *vācā*, *etc.* One who knows correctly these truths gets rid of hatred and attachment, rises above the belief in a self, drives out ignorance, and attains freedom from misery. So, we see that in these four truths there is nothing particularly Buddhistic. They are found in the Brahmanical systems of philosophy as well.<sup>3</sup> For instance, the *Yoga-sūtra* of Patañjali (II, 15)

<sup>1</sup> *Majjhima*, I, p. 261. See also *Lal. Vis.*, pp. 349, 416-7; *Mtu.*, II, p. 288; III, p. 53.

<sup>2</sup> *Digha*, III, pp. 228, 276; *Dhs.* 71-3; *Vis. M.*, p. 341.

<sup>3</sup> Prof. Stcherbatsky remarks; "These four topics—the four noble truths as the term has been very inadequately translated and re-



says: Yathā cikitsāsāstram caturvyūham, rogo rogahetur ārogyam bhaiṣajyam iti evam idam api sāstram caturvyūham eva tad yathā saṃsāraḥ saṃsārahetur mokṣo mokṣopāya iti (just as the science of medicine has four sections dealing with the diagnosis, cause and cure of diseases, and their remedies, so also this science of spiritual healing has four sections dealing with an examination of the nature of the things of the world, the cause of their origin, their removal, and the factors that bring about the removal). The *Abhidharmakośa* also follows up this interpretation by coalescing the four truths into two, viz., cause and effect, saṃsāra (world) and nirvāṇa (cessation). Duḥkha and samudaya relate to saṃsāra, while nirodha and mārga to Nirvāṇa. Saṃsāra (world) is the effect while samudaya is its cause; so also Nirvāṇa (cessation) is the effect while mārga is its cause.<sup>1</sup>

This position of the Hīnayānists with regard to the Ārya-satyas is logical, for their cardinal tenet is that a being suffers by wrongly assuming the existence of a self, and thus conceiving himself as a separate entity, standing in some form of relation to every other being or thing of the world, to which again he ascribes an individuality similar to his own. The chief aim of Hīnayāna teaching is to expel from one's mind all ideas of individuality, whether of himself or of any other being or thing of the world, and this can only be effected by an examination of the things of this world under the four aspects mentioned above. Scrutinizing everything in this way, a being gets rid of his wrong assumption and sees things as they really are. This is called sammādiṭṭhi (right view) or vijjā (true knowledge). Once this is reached he can be said to have attained freedom from misery, or Nirvāṇa.

presented as a fundamental principle of Buddhism—contain in reality no doctrine at all.” *Con. of N.*, p. 55.

<sup>1</sup> *Kośa*, VI. 4; see also Sogen, *Sys. of B. Thought*, pp. 69ff; *Sūtrā.*, pp. 137-8; it supports the interpretation of the *Kośa*, see *infra*.



## THE PRATĪTYASAMUTPĀDA

Of the four truths, the second and the third comprise the *Pratītyasamutpāda*. The chief object of this formula of causation is to establish that things of this world have only a dependent origination and hence are impermanent and productive of sufferings, and that there is nothing except Nirvāṇa and Ākāśa that does not depend upon cause and condition. This formula of causal law has been utilised by the Hīnayānists to show that all constituted things have a preceding cause and condition and as such they are without any substantiality, while it has been used by the Mahāyānists to establish that the world being relatively existent is unreal like the objects seen in a dream. The formula explains the fixed, unchangeable, and this-conditioned (*idappaccayatā*) nature of things; hence it is a key to the eternal truth. The moment a being realises in his life the truth of this formula he sees the Reality. We find for this reason that the Buddhist texts identify the formula with Buddha and Dhamma.<sup>1</sup> It was this solution of the problem of life and the world that appealed to Sāriputta and proved a fruitful source for Nāgārjuna's speculations.<sup>2</sup>

Many scholars, who have dealt with this formula, have attempted to elicit from it Buddha's theory of the origin of a being and some of them have actually drawn parallels between the links of the formula and the causal series of the Sāṃkhya.<sup>3</sup> It is noteworthy that such attempts were also made in Buddhaghosa's time. Buddhaghosa has, however, pointed out that *avijjā*, the first link of the chain, must not be regarded as similar to *prakṛti* (Prakṛti) of the Pakativādins (Sāṃkhya) because *avijjā* is neither uncaused (*akāraṇam*) nor is it the primary cause (*mūlakāraṇam*) of the world. It owes its origin to *āsavas* (impurities). The reason adduced by Buddhaghosa for its being made the first link in the chain is that Buddha

<sup>1</sup> See *ante*, p. 51.

<sup>2</sup> Nāgārjuna devoted his first chapter to the explanation of only this aspect of the law of causation.

<sup>3</sup> See Kern, *Manual etc.*, p. 46f.; for other refs., see Poussin, *Theorie des douze causes*, p. vii, fn. 2.



used 'avijjā' or 'bhavataṇhā' for commencing (sīsabhāvam) his discourses on topics which by their nature are without any beginning or end (vaṭṭakathā or anamatagga)<sup>1</sup>. It is apparent from Buddhaghosa's remark that avijjā need not necessarily be the first link in the chain of causation but that it is one of the terms found suitable by the author of the formula to begin the chain. It could as well be commenced by bhavataṇhā.<sup>2</sup> In the *Samyutta Nikāya*<sup>3</sup>, the formula starts with āhāra as the first link. Hence, we see that the Pratītyasamutpāda is not meant to be an explanation of the origin of the world but just a chain of instances to illustrate the law of idappaccayatā (this-conditioned nature, i.e., dependent origination) of things. Those scholars, who expected to find in it a key to the origin of the world, have been disappointed and have condemned it as illogical and incongruous. The author of the formula could not anticipate that his arrangement of the illustrations in a series would give rise to confusion. That the chain was not meant to demonstrate a line of evolution is also apparent from the last two links, viz., jāti and jarāmaraṇa, as the former cannot be the cause of the latter. The underlying idea is that if there be jāti, it is inevitably followed by jarāmaraṇa. The author of the formula wanted us to take up any two links and realise from them the idappaccayatā or the relative nature of worldly things. We may therefore say that the twelve-linked Pratītyasamutpāda like the Āryasatya is more a general principle than a doctrine peculiar to Buddhism, though undoubtedly, it owes its enunciation to the ancient Buddhist savants. It cannot be stated how far Buddha was responsible for the selection of the links though it was perhaps to his penetrating eye that the relative existence of all worldly things became apparent for the first time.

As the links of the formula have been explained by Profs.

<sup>1</sup> *Vis. M.*, p. 525.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 525: purimā, bhikkhave, koṭi na paññāyati avijjāya (or bhavataṇhāya), ito pubbe avijjā (or bhavataṇhā) nāhosi atha pacchā sambhavī ti. Evañ c'etaṃ, bhikkhave, vuccati, atha ca pana paññāyati idappaccayā avijjā (or bhavataṇhā). Cf. *Samyutta*, II, p. 178; III, p. 149.

<sup>3</sup> *Samyutta*, II, pp. 101-3, *Mahāniddeśa*, I, pp. 25-6.



La Vallée Poussin, Keith, Oldenberg and others we shall give here only a brief exposition of them<sup>1</sup>.

The formula runs as follows<sup>2</sup>: (1) *avijjāpaccayā*<sup>3</sup> *saṅkhārā*, (2) *saṅkhārāpaccayā viññāṇaṃ*, (3) *viññāṇap. nāmarūpaṃ*<sup>4</sup>, (4) *nāmarūpap. saḷāyatanaṃ*, (5) *saḷāyatanaṃ. phasso*, (6) *phassap. vedanā*, (7) *vedanāp. tanhā*, (8) *tanhāp. upādānaṃ*, (9) *upādānap. bhavo*, (10) *bhavap. jāti*, (11 & 12) *jātip. jarāmaranaṃ*.

The first link, *avijjā*, usually refers to the deluded state of mind which debars a being from taking a true view of worldly things, *e.g.*, mistaking impermanent things as permanent, misery as happiness, a being without a permanent self as possessed of a self and so forth.<sup>5</sup> The second link in the chain is *saṅkhārā* (impressions or thought-constructions—*cetanā*) concerning merit (*puñña*), demerit (*apuñña*), and qualities that are neither merit nor demerit (*āneñja*)<sup>6</sup>. This is followed by the third link *viññāṇa*<sup>7</sup> *i.e.*, perceptions through the six organs of sense. Concomitantly (*sahaja*) with *viññāṇa* arise the four composites (*khandhas*) and form a complete being (*nāmarūpa*) in the foetus.<sup>8</sup> With its growth, the *nāmarūpa* (body) requires the six organs of

<sup>1</sup> Poussin, *Theorie des douze causes*; Keith, *B. Phil.*, pp. 99ff.; Oldenberg's *Buddha* (Hoey's transl. 1882), pp. 223 f; Gokhale, *Pratītya-samutpādaśāstra des Ullāṅgha*, Bonn, 1930.

<sup>2</sup> *Dīgha*, II, pp. 55ff; La Vallée Poussin, *Theorie des douze causes*, pp. 69 ff; *Vis. M.*, pp. 518 ff, quoting *Samyutta*, II, pp. 25-7.

<sup>3</sup> In the *Samyutta* (II, pp. 101-3) *avijjā* is replaced by *āhāra* or any such other thing that gives rise to *viññāṇa*.

<sup>4</sup> *Dīgha* (II, p. 56) omits the first two links and begins its formula thus:—*Nāmarūpapaccayā viññāṇaṃ, viññāṇapaccayā nāmarūpaṃ, i.e.*, *viññāṇa* and *nāma-rūpa* are made interdependent. *Sālistambasūtra* (p. 82) says that they are *sahaja* (concomitant).

<sup>5</sup> *Sālistambasūtra*, p. 79; see also *Vis. M.*, p. 526.

<sup>6</sup> *Sālistambasūtra*, p. 82; to these three, the *Vibhaṅga* (p. 135) and *Visuddhimagga* (p. 530) add three other, *viz.*, *kāyasaṅkhāro*, *vacis.* and *cittas.* The *Sālistambasūtra* explains in another place (p. 79) that *rāga*, *dveṣa* and *moha* in regard to worldly things arising through *avidyā* are called *samskāras*.

<sup>7</sup> *Sālistambasūtra*, p. 82; *Vis. M.* (p. 546) says that *puññābhisāṅkhāro* produces twenty-one kinds of *viññāṇa*, *apuññābhi*<sup>o</sup> seven, and *āneñjābhi*<sup>o</sup> four.

<sup>8</sup> In the *Dīgha* (II, p. 63) and *Sālistambasūtra* (p. 82) *viññāṇa* and



sense for doing its work, and these organs in their turn produce six forms of contact (phassa).<sup>1</sup> The nature of the contact produces its corresponding feeling (vedanā) and the feeling in its turn gives rise to desire (taṇhā). Taṇhā leads to upādāna<sup>2</sup> (grasping) of kāma (desire for objects of pleasure), diṭṭhi (wrong views like sassata, asassata, etc.), sīlabbata (religious practices like gosīla and govata) and attavāda (belief in a self). This upādāna, which may also be defined as a stronger taṇhā, produces a keen desire in a being for future existence in any one of the three worlds, and for this he performs kamma through words, mind and body. According to his *kamma* he is reborn in one of the various spheres of existence and becomes in due course old and passes away.

REASONS ADDUCED BY THE MAHĀYĀNISTS FOR INCLUDING THE TRUTHS AND THE CAUSAL LAW IN THEIR DOCTRINES

The Mahāyānists highly appreciated the teaching conveyed by the formula of causation but were not interested in the significance of its links, as their cardinal tenet was *dharmasūnyatā* or non-existence of everything worldly. Similarly for the āryasatyas, they appreciated the method of analysis of all worldly things as suggested by the four satyas but these in their view have existence similar to the objects in a dream or a mirage. Thus, if everything be non-existent, the examination of a non-existent thing is absurd; hence the Mahāyānists should by reasons justify the inclusion of the Āryasatyas and the Pratītyasamutpāda in their doctrines. Nāgārjuna and Śāntideva, Asaṅga and Vasubandhu therefore have shown by forcible and illuminating arguments that they were justified in including the Truths and the twelve-linked Law of Causation in their doctrines.

nāmarūpa are shown as resting upon each other, i.e., one cannot remain without the other.

<sup>1</sup> Adhivacanasamphassa and paṭighasamphassa, *Dīgha*, II, p. 62.

<sup>2</sup> *Dīgha*, II, p. 58; *Vis. M.*, p. 569.



## NĀGĀRJUNA SUMMARISES THE POSITION OF THE HĪNAYĀNISTS

Nāgārjuna has dealt with the Truths incidentally in his examination of Pratyaya, Karmaphala, Ātman,<sup>1</sup> etc., and at length in his treatment of the Āryasatyas<sup>2</sup>. He first summarises the arguments of his opponents thus: If everything be non-existent (śūnya), there cannot arise any question about the origin and decay of a thing,—in this case, duḥkha (misery). The five constituents of beings, which come into existence through pre-existing cause and condition, are called duḥkha, because they produce suffering, being subject to change and transformation. That these constituents are a source of suffering is realised by the Āryas (i.e., Arhats) only, and not by the common people, for the latter labour under the four misconceptions (viparyāsas)<sup>3</sup> of considering impure things as pure, impermanent as permanent, unhappy as happy, and egoless as having ego. The common people are like the sick, to whom sweet things appear bitter. A person who is not yet an arhat (anārya) does not know that the five upādānaskandhas are a source of suffering. It is for this reason that the Truths (satyas) are called truths for the perfect only. If everything be śūnya (non-existent), there cannot be the first Āryasatya called duḥkha and consequently there can be no samudaya (origin), nirodha (destruction), or mārga (means of destruction of suffering). If the four Āryasatyas do not exist, there cannot exist true knowledge, exertion, or realisation, the four fruits of sanctification or their enjoyer, the Saṅgha, Dharma, or even Buddha. The assertion of śūnyatā (non-existence of everything) goes against the existence of the three ratnas, in fact, of all things, good or bad.

## NĀGĀRJUNA'S ARGUMENTS TO MEET THE ABOVE CHARGES

Nāgārjuna pities his opponents for their inability to grasp the true sense of śūnyatā, or the object of establishing śūnya-

<sup>1</sup> *M. Vr.*, chs. I, XVII, XVIII.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, ch. XXIV.

<sup>3</sup> *Bodhic.*, p. 375; *M. Vr.*, pp. 464 and 607 referring to *Netti*, p. 114 and *Index*; *Sīkṣā.*, p. 198; *Āṅguttara*, II, p. 52; *Pātañjala-Yogasūtra*, II, 5; *Sarvadarśana-saṅgraha* (ed. of Mm. Vasudev Abhayankar), p. 361; see also *infra*.



tā, and for their false imagination. The object of teaching śūnyatā, he says, is to bring about a complete cessation of all prapañca (i.e., looking upon unity as manifold). The view held by his opponents that mokṣa (emancipation) is attained by the destruction of action (karma) and passion (kleśa) is incorrect. It is a known fact that ordinarily persons are ignorant of the real state of things. They conceive rūpa (form), etc. and allow passion, hatred and delusion to come into existence. From this statement as also from the *Śūtras*, it is evident that saṅkalpa (imagination) is the source of all these, from which it follows that karma and kleśa are only products of imagination and have no real existence. Their origin is due to the prapañca (thought-creation) which takes hold of the mind of a worldly being, who from the time immemorial is used to a variety of actions and things such as gain and loss, happiness and misery, action and the actor, known and the knower, and so forth. All these worldly thought-creations cease to exist when a person realises the non-existence of the things which are commonly supposed to have real existence. Just as a person does not form any idea (prapañca) about the 'beauty of a barren woman's daughter' and consequently does not weave a net of fancies (kalpanā) around her, so also a Mahāyānist is not troubled with the conception of "I" and "Mine", the roots of a belief in self (satkāyadr̥ṣṭi), nor is he troubled by any cause for the origin of passions. If a person realises that passions (kleśas) do not originate, he cannot have any idea of good or bad action and consequently birth, old age, disease and death. Therefore the Yogins (ascetics) established in śūnyatā do not conceive any real skandha, dhātu, āyatana, etc. and consequently they have no prapañca, vikalpa, satkāyadr̥ṣṭi, kleśa, karma or mṛtyu. Thus the realisation of śūnyatā brings about the complete cessation of all prapañcas, and so it is said that the realisation of śūnyatā is the same as the realisation of Nirvāṇa.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *M. V.*, pp. 350-1.



ŚŪNYATĀ IS NEITHER NĀSTITVA NOR ABHĀVA

Having dealt with the object of the teaching of śūnyatā, Nāgārjuna proceeds to an exposition of śūnyatā by stating its essentials (lakṣaṇas), which are as follows<sup>1</sup>:—

(i) It is *aparapratyaya*, i.e., it cannot be imparted by one to another.<sup>2</sup> One is to realise the Truth within himself (pratyātmavedya), and not to understand it by listening to the instruction of Āryas (the Perfect), who can speak of the Truth only through superimpositions (samāropa).

(ii) It is *śānta*, i.e., it has the nature of cessation,<sup>3</sup> it is undisturbed by origination or destruction.

(iii) It is *prapañcairaprapaṇcitam*, i.e., it is inexpressible.<sup>4</sup> The first prapañca is taken as a synonym of speech (vāk),<sup>5</sup> i.e. the sense of śūnyatā is not utterable by words.

(iv) It is *nirvikalpa* or unrealisable in concepts. Vikalpa is thought-construction; so śūnyatā is beyond (lit. devoid of) thought-construction. And, lastly,

(v) It is *anānārtha*, i.e., devoid of different meanings.

Thus he points out that śūnyatā is not to be taken in the sense of nāstitva (nihilism) or abhāva (absence of something) as wrongly supposed by the Hīnayānists. He continues his exposition of śūnyatā by equating it with the pratītyasamutpāda, saying

yaḥ pratītyasamutpādaḥ śūnyatām taṃ pracakṣmahe,  
sā prajñaptir upādāya pratipat saiva madhyamā.

(We say that dependent origination is śūnyatā. It is in that sense that the path is middle.) All phenomenal

<sup>1</sup> *M. Vr.*, pp. 372-7.

<sup>2</sup> Prof. Stcherbatsky (*Con. of N.*, p. 41) translates it as “uncognisable from without” but the commentary of Candrakīrti does not seem to warrant the rendering.

<sup>3</sup> See *M. Vr.*, p. 160 where it is shown why śāntam is taken in the sense of svabhāva-virahitam. The point is that anything having real existence cannot be subject to the causal law; so whatever is subject to causal law has no real existence like the seed and the sprout. Hence both of them can be described as śānta or svabhāva-virahita. Prof. Stcherbatsky (*op. cit.*) uses the word “quiescent” for śānta.

<sup>4</sup> Prof. Stcherbatsky (*op. cit.*) translates it “undifferentiated in words.”

<sup>5</sup> *M. Vr.*, p. 373.



things are relatively existent, e.g., sprout and seed, viññānas with reference to cause and condition; hence, Nāgārjuna says that things, which are only relatively existent, have in reality no origination, and the fact of this non-origination in reality is śūnyatā. So it is asserted by the Teacher in the *Anavataptahradāpasāṅkramanaśūtra*<sup>1</sup> that whatever is said to have come into existence through cause and condition (i.e. relatively) is really unborn; it cannot have real origination; and whatever is subject to cause and condition is śūnya. The statement made in the *Laṅkāvatāra* and elsewhere that all dharmas are śūnya (non-existent) refers to the non-origination of things in reality. It is in this sense that the connotation of śūnyatā has come into existence. Hence it is said that śūnyatā, which bears the sign of non-origination in reality, is the middle path. That which is really non-originated can neither be said to exist nor to vanish; hence is neither existent nor non-existent, and as such it is the Middle Path which keeps clear of the two extremes.<sup>2</sup>

We may consider this topic in another way. There is nothing which originates without cause and condition and therefore there is nothing which can be called aśūnya (non-relative). It is said in the *Śataka* and elsewhere that nothing is ever produced without cause and condition, or, in other words, there is nothing eternal. The ignorant only conceive of eternity, etc. in regard to Ākāśa. The wise know that all things are caused and conditioned, and they never fall into the delusion of either of the two extremes. If it be admitted, as is done by some of the Hīnayānists,<sup>3</sup> that things (i.e., the elements that constitute a being) are uncaused and unconditioned, then the four Āryasatyas are contradicted, for how can there be duḥkha, the first truth, if things come into existence without cause and condition (apratītya)?

<sup>1</sup> *M. Vr.*, p. 239.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Bodhic.*, p. 359 :

na san nāsan na sadasan na cāpyanubhayātmakam,  
catuṣkoṭivinirmuktaṃ tattvaṃ mādhyamikā viduḥ.

<sup>3</sup> Referring evidently to the Sarvāstivādins.



BUDDHA'S TEACHINGS WERE DELIVERED IN TWO WAYS :

Nāgārjuna, thus establishing that *śūnyatā* is neither *nāstitva* nor *abhāva* but a word signifying the relative existence of things, says that the Hīnayānists, too much engrossed in the studies of texts alone, have misunderstood the sense of *śūnyatā* and do not understand that the Teacher delivered his teachings in two ways, *viz.*, conventional and real, or empirical and transcendental. So it is said by Nāgārjuna :

dve satye samupāśritya buddhānāṃ dharmadeśanā,  
lokasaṃvṛtisatyam ca satyam ca paramārthataḥ.<sup>1</sup>

(The teachings of Buddhas are based on two kinds of truth, the truth of the world, and the truth in the highest sense).

(a) SAMVṚTI

Nāgārjuna as well as Śāntideva points out that the words in common usage, *e.g.*, *skandha*, *ātman*, *loka*, etc., being enveloped (*sāṃvṛta*) on all sides are called conventional. The expression *Samvṛti* has three different senses, which are as follows:—

(1) *Samvṛti* is the same as ignorance on account of its completely enveloping the reality, or, in other words, it is identical with ignorance (*avidyā*).<sup>2</sup> In elucidation of this, Prajñākaramati, the commentator of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, says that ignorance superimposes a form on a non-existent thing and thus creates an obstacle to the correct view of the reality. In support of his statement he quotes from the *Śālistambasūtra* a stanza, in which it is stated that ignor-

<sup>1</sup> *M. Vr.*, p. 492; *Bodhic.*, p. 361. The two kinds of Truth have been dealt with in the *Madhyamakāvatāra* (Chs. V, VI); see *Le Muséon*, 1907, N.S., vol. VIII for summary of Ch. V.

<sup>2</sup> *Bodhic.*, p. 352; *Samvriyate āvriyate yathābhūtaparijñānam svabhāvāvaraṇād āvṛta(=abhūta)prakāśanāc ca nayeti saṃvṛtiḥ. Avidyā moho viparyāsa iti paryāyāḥ.* It is called *saṃvṛti* because it envelopes the real knowledge and also because it helps to uncover that which is, as a matter of course, enveloped. It is synonymous with ignorance, delusion, or misconception. For *Paramārtha* being the same as *Nirvāṇa*, see *infra*.



ance (avidyā) is nothing but the non-realisation (apratipatti) of the truth, and faith in falsehood.

(2) Saṃvṛti implies a thing which depends on another for existence, *i.e.*, subject to cause and condition,<sup>1</sup> for a really self-existent thing cannot have origin and decay, or any kind of transformation; so whatever is caused and conditioned is sāmṃvṛta (phenomenal).

(3) Saṃvṛti refers to signs or words current in the world, *i.e.*, accepted by the generality of the people and based on direct perception.<sup>2</sup> Śāntideva desires to point out that rūpa (form), śabda (sound), etc. should not be supposed to be really existing on account of being directly perceived by all in the same way. Their existence is substantiated by proofs which are valid from the worldly, and not from the transcendental, standpoint. If all that is perceived by the senses be true, then a fool knows the truth, and there is no need of exerting for the acquisition of truth. In support of his statement, he cites the illustration that the body of a woman, though impure in the highest sense, is regarded as pure by a man whose mind is swayed by attachment; hence a fact cannot be established merely by experience.

It may be argued that as the expressions like dhātu, āyatana, etc. occur in the scriptures, they are real, and besides had they been non-existent, the Teacher would not have referred to them as momentary, subject to decay, etc. Śāntideva explains this away by saying that the Teacher used them only as artifices to lead men, having minds engrossed in thinking of object as existent, to the conception of śūnyatā, *i.e.*, things as really non-existent. Whatever Buddha said about skandha, dhātu, āyatana or their transitoriness is conventional and not real; hence the existence of dhātus and āyatanas in reality is not established. If it be held that every object of experience is unreal, how can we account for the experience of kṣaṇikatva (transitoriness) of

<sup>1</sup> *Bodhic.*, p. 352: pratītyasamutpannam vasturūpaṃ saṃvṛtir ucyate.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 374-5: pratyakṣyam api rūpādi prasiddhyā na pramāṇataḥ.



pudgala by the yogins (ascetics) who have perfected themselves in the meditation of pudgalanairātmyā (essencelessness of constituted things)? Śāntideva's answer is very simple. He said that even the experiences of yogins are not above saṃvṛti, for saṃvṛti includes everything that falls within the scope of buddhi (intelligence), and the reality lies beyond it. The experience of the yogins that a woman's body is impure contradicts the experience of an ordinary man who considers it to be pure. Thus it is proved that the scriptural authority does not establish the reality of skandha, dhātu, āyatana, etc.

#### TWO KINDS OF SAMVṚTI-SATYAS

All that has been said above applies to loka-saṃvṛti only, *i.e.*, truths valid in the world of convention, which are accepted as such by the generality of the people. There is however another kind of the so-called truth, which should be distinguished as Aloka-saṃvṛti; *i.e.*, truths not accepted by the generality of the people. The experiences of a man with diseased eyes or defective organs of sense are peculiar to the man and are not true for all. Such experiences should be called Aloka-saṃvṛti (conventional truths but not general).

Śāntideva calls these two kinds of conventional truths Tathya-saṃvṛti and Mithyā-saṃvṛti, and distinguishes them thus:<sup>1</sup> The Tathya-saṃvṛti (phenomenal truth) refers to things which originate out of a cause (kiñcit pratītyajātam) and are perceived in the same way by all persons with unimpaired organs of sense, *e.g.*, the colour blue, etc. The Mithyā-saṃvṛti refers to those things or statements which are accepted only by individuals and not universally, though they may have originated through cause and condition, *i.e.*, they are like things perceived by a person with a defective organ of sense.

#### (b) PARAMĀRTHASATYA

The truth of the Āryas who see things as they really are is quite different from the two so-called truths mentioned

<sup>1</sup> *Bodhic.*, p. 353.



above. Nāgārjuna says that this truth, Paramārthasatya, is identical with Nirvāṇa.<sup>1</sup> It does not admit of any distinction as subject and object.<sup>2</sup> It is un-originating and un-decaying, and as such it is not an object to be grasped by the mind. It is indeterminable by speech and unknowable by knowledge.<sup>3</sup> Hence the highest truth is inexpressible and can be realised only within one's own self.<sup>4</sup> It cannot form the subject-matter of instruction, and hence it cannot be imparted by one to another. Śāntideva explains the truth (tattva or paramārthasatya) as beyond the range of buddhi (intellection or perception) while that which comes within the range of buddhi is conventional (saṃvṛti).<sup>5</sup> According to him, the truth is attainable by giving up all things which act as hindrances to knowledge, viz., impressions (vāsanā), connection (anusandhi) and passion (kleśa) through comprehension of the real nature of things. It is therefore the same as the non-existence of all dharmas and as such it may be taken as a synonym of sūnyatā (essencelessness), tathatā (thatness), bhūtakoti (true limit), and dharmadhātu (totality of things). All that is caused and conditioned is not really existent, because everything undergoes change with time, while in a really existent thing no change is possible; neither can the fact of coming and going be attributed to it. Things that are supposed to have existence are like an illusion or an echo, because they arise through cause and condition, and disappear when the cause and condition cease. So, in reality, there can be no origination through cause and condition, because real origination does not depend upon and is not subject to something else. All things arise subject to some preceding causes and condi-

<sup>1</sup> See *ante*. Saṃvṛti is identified with avidyā and buddhi. See *Bodhic.*, pp. 352, 366, also Stcherbatsky, *op. cit.*, p. 164 n.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Bodhic.*, p. 366: Paramārthasatyam sarvavyavahārasamatikrāntam nirviśeṣam. Asamutpannam aniruddham. Abhidheyābhidhānājñeyajñānavigatam.

<sup>3</sup> *M. Vr.*, pp. 364, 493.

<sup>4</sup> *Bodhic.*, p. 367: āryāṇām eva svasaṃvidita-svabhāvatayā pratyātmavedyam.

<sup>5</sup> *Bodhic.*, p. 354.



tions; hence they are really non-existent. How, then, can an existent thing be expected to arise out of them? Can anybody ascertain whence the illusory things produced by causes come and where they go? In this connection Śāntideva comments elaborately on the famous stanza of Nāgārjuna :

na svato nāpi parato na dvābhyāṃ nāpyahetutaḥ,  
utpannā jātu vidyante bhāvāḥ kvacana kecana <sup>1</sup>.

(Nowhere and never does a really existent thing originate out of a self or non-self or both self and non-self or without any cause).

The aim of Śāntideva as also other writers on Mahāyāna is to assert that the real truth (paramārthasatya) is that things of this world have no more existence than the magic figures created by a magician. As these figures and their movements are taken as real by the ordinary people while the magician himself does not concern himself about their reality, so also in this world, the viparyastas i.e., those whose vision is obscured and subject to error run after, or weave their thoughts around, the various phenomenal things, while the yogin, who knows the highest reality, does not pay heed to them. In short, the Paramārthasatya is nothing but the realisation of the dream-like or echo-like nature of Saṃvṛtisatya.<sup>2</sup>

If Paramārthasatya be of an inexpressible nature and Saṃvṛtisatya be non-existing like an illusion or echo as urged by Nāgārjuna and Śāntideva, a Hīnayānist may enquire about the necessity of preaching on the topics like skandha, dhātu,

<sup>1</sup> *Bodhic.*, p. 357; *M. Vr.*, p. 12.

<sup>2</sup> *Bodhic.*, pp. 368, 379. The Satyasiddhi school introduced the two kinds of truth, Vyavahārasatya and Paramārthasatya into the Buddhist metaphysics. In the *Akṣayamatīrdeśasūtra* these two truths form the principal subject of discussion (Vaidya, *Catuhśatikā*, p. 19). In the Mahāyāna literature there are other expressions bearing the same sense as Paramārtha and Saṃvṛti, e.g., Nītārtha and Neyyārtha, see *M. Vr.*, p. 41; V. Sastri, *I.H.Q.*, iv, 2 on Sandhyā-bhāṣā; *M. Vr.*, pp. 41; *Sūtrā.*, p. 51.

For Pāramārthika and Ābhiprāyikī, see *M. Vr.*, pp. 42 ff; *Sūtrā.*, p. 138; Keith, *B. Phil.*, p. 235; *Journal Asiatique*, 1903, ii, p. 360 for comments on Saṃvṛti and Paramārtha.



āyatana, āryasatya, pratītyasamutpāda etc., which are conventionally true and not true in the highest sense (atattva). The reply is

vyavahāram anāśritya paramārtho na deśyate,  
paramārtham anāgamyā nirvāṇam nābhigamyate <sup>1</sup>.

(The highest truth cannot be imparted without having recourse to conventional truths; and Nirvāṇa cannot be attained without the realisation of the highest truth). In other words, the highest truth cannot be brought home directly to a mind, which normally does not rise above the conventional distinction of subject and object, knower and known; hence it must be imparted through conventional truths, and unless it is so imparted one cannot be expected to extricate himself from worldly limitations and arrive at Nirvāṇa. It is for this reason that the Mahāyānists cannot dispense with sāmvr̥ta topics like dhātu, āyatana, āryasatya and pratītyasamutpāda; they are like vessels to the seeker of water.

The other reason <sup>2</sup> for which the Mahāyānists cannot dispense with sāmvr̥ta topics is that the Paramārthasatya cannot be explained to another by signs or predicates, but yet it has to be explained. So the only alternative is to explain it by the negation of sāmvr̥ta matters. As it is *agocara* (beyond the cognizance of buddhi—intellection), *aviṣaya* (beyond the scope of knowledge), *sarvaprapañcavinirmukta* (beyond the possibility of detailed descriptions), *kalpanāsamatikrānta* (beyond every possible form of imagination, e.g., existence or non-existence, true or untrue, eternal or non-eternal, permanent or impermanent, happy or unhappy, pure or impure, and so forth) <sup>3</sup>, the only way to explain it to the people is through common place terms and illustrations. A person with diseased eyes sees a net of hair; he is corrected by another whose eyes are healthy, the latter negating the afflicted man's statement that there (really) is a net of hair. The

<sup>1</sup> *M. Vr̥.*, p. 494; *Bodhic.*, p. 365; see also p. 372: Upāyabhūtaṁ vyavahārasatyam upēyabhūtaṁ paramārthasatyam (also in the *Madhyama-kāvatāra*, vi, 80). *Pañca.* (A.S.B. ms.) leaf 56a: Na ca Subhūte saṃskṛtavyatirekena asaṃskṛtaṁ śakyam prajñāpayitum.

<sup>2</sup> *Bodhic.*, p. 363.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 366–7. These terms can be easily multiplied.



man with healthy eyes does not indicate by such a negation that he is either denying or affirming something. Similarly, persons whose right vision is obstructed by ignorance conceive of the existence of skandha, dhātu, āyatana, etc., which are in reality non-existent phenomenal forms. Buddhas like the persons with healthy eyes know this, and they cannot help saying that there are in reality no skandhas, dhātus, āyatanas, but thereby they neither deny nor affirm their existence. Therefore the highest truth cannot be preached without the help of the conventional truths. So it is said

anākṣarasya dharmasya śrutiḥ kā deśanā ca kā,  
śrūyate deśyate cārthaḥ samāropād anākṣaraḥ<sup>1</sup>.

[How can there be hearing and preaching of dharma which is un-utterable (lit. cannot be articulated); it is by the superimposition of ideas on the reality which is inexpressible that the latter can be preached or heard.]

If it be established that all mundane things are really non-existent, there is a probability of the Paramārtha (the highest truth) being conceived as nihilism. Nāgārjuna sounds a note of warning against such a conception by saying that śūnyatā should not be identified with the extinction of a thing which existed before. The question of extinction or nihilism does not arise, because the existence of something preceding is not admitted. Neither should it be regarded as something existing by having recourse to superimpositions. Those, who do not realise the real distinction between these two kinds of truth, fall into the error of either conceiving śūnyatā as the non-existence of saṃskāras (constituents of a being) or of assuming the existence of something as the basis of śūnyatā. Both are wrong views, and people of limited knowledge misunderstand śūnyatā as the one or the other. The distinction was, in fact, so very subtle that even Buddha hesitated to preach the truth at first.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Bodhic.*, p. 365; *M. Vr.*, p. 264, xv. 2; cf. *Laṅkā.*, p. 194.

<sup>2</sup> Buddhaghosa also uses this argument, see *ante*.



THE HĪNAYĀNISTS MISTAKE ŚŪNYATĀ AS ABHĀVA

In concluding his argument, Nāgārjuna says that the Hīnayānists, by attributing the sense of abhāva (absence or non-existence) after assuming the existence of something to śūnyatā, fall into error and fail to understand the standpoint of the Mahāyānists. The Mahāyānic conception of śūnyatā, *i.e.*, that everything is non-existent fits in correctly with all dharmas and all statements; it is when śūnyatā is seen in this light that one can perceive the reasonableness of the formulæ of Causal Law and the Four Truths, the fruits of sanctification, saṅgha, dharma, buddha, things worldly and transcendental, deeds right and wrong, a good or bad condition and other conventional matters. Nāgārjuna having stated his position attacks the Hīnayānists for their inability to comprehend the correct sense of the Causal Law. He says that just as a rider while riding may forget his horse and revile another for stealing it, so also the Hīnayānists, because of their distracted mind, fail to grasp the truth that śūnyatā is the true sense and the chief characteristic of the Causal Law, and attack the Mahāyānists, the Śūnyatāvādins, for misinterpreting it.

THE POSITION OF THE HĪNAYĀNISTS WITH REGARD TO THE TRUTHS AND THE CAUSAL LAW IS UNTENABLE

Nāgārjuna now proceeds to assail the position of his opponents. He says that those, who admit the reality of unconstituted things, cannot logically support the Āryasatyas and the Pratityasamutpāda.

It should be remembered that the Hīnayānists apply the Causal Law to constituted things only. Nāgārjuna attempts to make the position of the Hīnayānists untenable by asserting that the Law should be universally applicable, and that there cannot be anything in the world which was excepted by Buddha as beyond its range. He argues that if things exist by themselves, they are not subject to causes and conditions, and such being the case, there is no need to draw distinctions of external and internal, no need of causes and conditions, or the doer and the doing of an action. In short, the Hīnayānic theory contradicts the origin and decay



as well as the fruits of sanctification. Hence, the position of the Hīnayānists that things exist by themselves is untenable. It also contradicts the words of Buddha who said on many occasions: *apratītyasamutpanno dharmah kaścin na vidyate* (there never exists anything which originated without cause and condition). This statement of Buddha, however, fits in with the definition of *sūnyatā* as given by the Mahāyānists.

If all things be existent (*aśūnya*) and if it originates without cause and condition, there cannot be anything impermanent, and consequently no *duḥkha*.

Again, if *duḥkha* be taken as something existing, then the truths of *samudaya* and *nirodha* (origin and decay) of misery, and *mārga* (the eight-fold path leading to the decay of misery) are meaningless. Nāgārjuna thus pays back the Hīnayānists in their own coin.

Then, with reference to the *pariññāna* (detailed knowledge) of the Hīnayānists, Nāgārjuna shows that it is not logical to maintain that *duḥkha*, assuming it to be an existent thing, was unknown before, and that it is known subsequently because existent things remain always in the same condition (*svabhāvaḥ samavasthitaḥ*) and never undergo any change. If an existent thing be not subject to change, it cannot be maintained that *duḥkha* which was unknowable at first was known later on. From this it follows that there is no *duḥkha-pariññāna* (knowledge of suffering). Consequently, *prahāṇa* (abandonment), *sākṣātkaraṇa* (realisation), and *bhāvanā* (meditation) are meaningless.

As it is unreasonable to claim knowledge of *duḥkha*, which was formerly by nature unknowable, it is wrong to assume the existence of the fruit of *Srotāpatti*, which did not exist before but was realised later on; and so with the other fruits of sanctification. The same reasoning—that which was by nature unattainable cannot be attained later on—is applied to show that there can be no one who enjoys these fruits, and consequently no Saṅgha. If there be no Āryasatyas, there cannot be Dharma, and in the absence of Dharma and Saṅgha there cannot be a Buddha. If it be assumed that Buddha and Bodhi exist by themselves, then



one remains without any reference to the other. If Buddhahood be taken as already existing, a person, who by nature is a non-Buddha, can never attain Bodhi, however much he may practise the Bodhisattva duties, because a non-Buddha cannot be expected to change.

#### MAHĀYĀNIC DEFINITION OF ĀRYASATYAS

Nāgārjuna's point is that if a thing exists by itself then it is absurd to speak of it as created, having a creator, and so forth. Just as nobody speaks of uncovering the sky because the open sky exists by itself, so also nobody should say that a thing, existing by itself, has been made or attained. In fact, the theory of *pratityasamutpanna* (one existing with reference to another, *i.e.*, relatively) must be admitted, as otherwise even the expressions of everyday usage such as go, do, cook, read, etc., become meaningless. If the world is supposed to exist by itself, the world would be unoriginating, undecaying and unchangeable as the self-existent is changeless. The world, according to the *Asūnyavādins* (*i.e.* the Realists who do not admit *śūnyatā*), would have no concern with the Causal Law and be beyond the possibility of diversity. Had the world been so, says the *Pitāputrasamāgamasūtra*, it would not have been dealt with by Buddha, and the Teacher would have, as the *Hastikakṣyasūtra* says, gone there with all disciples.

Nāgārjuna concludes by saying that he who realises *Pratityasamutpāda* can rightly know the four truths and quotes a passage from the *Mañjuśrīpariṣcchā* dealing with the Mahāyanic view of the four truths. It runs as follows,—he who realises that no dharmas have originated has known *duḥkha*; he who realises the non-existence of all dharmas has suppressed the source (*samudaya*) of misery; he who realises that all dharmas are completely extinct (*parinirvṛta*) has comprehended the truth of *nirodha* (cessation), and he who realises the means by which the absence of all things is known is said to have practised the path (*mārga*). This has been developed thus in the *Dhyāyitamustisūtra*: Unable to comprehend the four truths properly on account of being



troubled by the four viparyāśas (misconceptions),<sup>1</sup> sentient beings cannot go beyond the world of transmigration. They conceive of ātman (self) and ātmīya (things relating to a self) and thus have karmābhisamkāra (actions).<sup>2</sup> Not knowing that all things are completely extinct (parinirvṛta) they imagine the existence of themselves and others, and become engrossed therein to the extent of having affection, infatuation and ultimately delusion. They now perform actions, physically, verbally, and mentally, and after making some superimpositions of existence on non-existing things, they think that they are subject to affection, infatuation, and delusion. In order to get rid of them, they take initiation into the doctrines of Buddha, observe the precepts and hope to pass beyond the world and attain Nirvāṇa. They imagine that some things are good, some bad; some are to be rejected, some to be realised; that duḥkha is to be known, the samudaya of duḥkha to be given up, the nirodha of duḥkha to be realised, and the mārga to be practised. They also imagine that all constituted things are impermanent and endeavour to pass beyond them. Thus, they attain a mental state full of disgust (or contempt) for constituted things, having animitta (absence of sign or cause) as its preceding condition. They think that they have thus known duḥkha, i.e., the transitoriness of constituted things, become terrified by them, and shun their causes. Having imagined something as source (samudaya) of duḥkha, they conceive of cessation (nirodha) of duḥkha and decide to follow the path (mārga) to attain it. They retire to a secluded place with a mind full of disgust and attain quietude (śamatha). Their minds are no longer moved by worldly things and they think that they have done all that is to be done, they are freed from all sufferings and have become arhats. But after death they find themselves reborn among the gods and in their minds exist

<sup>1</sup> See *ante*, p. 212.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Bodhic.*, p. 350; Viparyāśasamjūno 'satsattvasamāropābhini-  
veśavaśād ātmātmīyagrahapravṛtter ayoniśomanasikāraprasūto rāgādi-  
kleśagaṇaḥ samupajāyate. Tasmāt karma, tato janma, etc.



doubts about Buddha and his knowledge. When they die again, they pass to hell because they doubt the existence of the Tathāgata after forming some misconceptions about all dharmas which are unoriginated. The four truths are therefore to be seen in the light of the *Mañjuśrīsūtra* as pointed out above.

#### THE *Prajñāpāramitā* ON THE ĀRYASATYAS

The new point of view from which the Āryasatyas are looked at by Nāgārjuna's school appears in the *Prajñāpāramitā* in connection with the attempt to explain the conception of śūnyatā. The *Pañcaviṃsati-sāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā* thus defines the Āryasatyas :<sup>1</sup>

What is *duḥkhasatyāvavāda*? A Bodhisattva while practising the *prajñāpāramitā* should not consider himself to be attached or unattached (yukta or ayukta) to any one of the five skandhas, or to any organ of sense, or to their āyatana or to the vijñāna produced by the contact of the organs of sense with their respective objects, or to any of the four truths, twelve links of the chain of causation, eighteen kinds of śūnyatā, and so forth. He should not look upon anything as rūpa, vedanā, etc., as connected or unconnected. This is called, according to the *Prajñāpāramitā*, a sermon on the first truth, Duḥkha. The underlying idea is that if a Bodhisattva thinks himself as connected or unconnected with anything, which, according to the *Prajñāpāramitā*, is non-existent or has only a conventional existence, then the Bodhisattva is subject to duḥkha (suffering); even if a Bodhisattva considers himself as having realised the truths or the causal law or śūnyatā, he would be subject to duḥkha, though, according to the Hīnayānists, the Bodhisattva thereby attains sukha or nirvāṇa.

What is *samudayasatyāvavāda*? A Bodhisattva while practising *prajñāpāramitā* does not consider whether rūpa or any other skandha is subject to origination or destruction (utpādadharmin or nirodhadharmin), or to contamination or purification (saṃkleśadharmin or vyāvadānadharmin). He knows

<sup>1</sup> *Pañca.*, pp. 43 f.



that rūpa does not convert (samavasaraṭi) into vedanā, or vedanā into saṃjñā, and so forth; a dharma, in fact, on account of its nature being unreal (prakṛti-sūnyatā), cannot be converted into another dharma. Neither that which is sūnyatā (non-existence) of rūpa is rūpa, nor does the sūnyatā of rūpa take a rūpa (form); therefore sūnyatā is neither different from, nor identical with, rūpa, and in this way the other skandhas are treated. This is called the sermon on samudaya. The object of this discourse is to establish that the so-called things of the world have really no existence and hence there can be no origination, transformation, or destruction, and so a Bodhisattva should remain unconcerned with the conception of samudaya of things.

What is *nirodhasatyāvavāda*? A Bodhisattva is to know that sūnyatā has no origin, decay, contamination, purification, decrease, increase, past, present, or future. In it, therefore, there can be no rūpa, vedanā etc., no duḥkha, samudaya, etc., not even srotāpanna, sakṛdāgāmi or Buddha. This is called *nirodhasatyāvavāda*. This statement is meant to convey that nirodha is nothing but the realisation of the real nature of sūnyatā.

Arguing in this way the *Prajñāpāramitā* shows that the truth is sūnyatā, i.e., the non-existence of the so-called things of the world, and this may be called the third truth, nirodha, while duḥkha consists in thinking oneself as related in some way or other to the conventional things, and samudaya in believing that the origination of things does really happen. As the mārga has no place in this interpretation of the āryasatyas, the *Prajñāpāramitā* omits it.

#### MISCONCEPTION OF THE ARHATS

Nāgārjuna, as we have seen, establishes by quotations from the Mahāyānic texts that Hīnayānic Arhats labour under misconceptions. Of the four common misconceptions (viparyāśas), they are not free from the fourth, viz., seeing ego in egoless things, thinking non-existent things as existent.<sup>1</sup> But this statement of Nāgārjuna or of the Mahāyānic texts

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Bodhic.*, p. 350.



with reference to the Hinayānists has in view the egolessness of things generally (dharmaśūnyatā) and not merely of constituted things with which the Hinayānists are concerned. Nāgārjuna ends his discourse by asserting that the truth is that all things are like echo, mirage, or images in dreams. When one realises this, he has neither love nor hatred for any being and with a mind like the sky, he does not know of any distinctions as Buddha, Dharma, or Saṅgha and does not have doubts regarding anything. Being without doubt and without attachment, he attains parinirvāṇa without upādāna.

Śāntideva<sup>1</sup> also reasons in this way and says that a person's avidyā, the source of delusion, which comes about on account of the attribution of existence (sat) to non-existent things (asat), or ego (ātmā) to egoless things (anātmā), ceases to exist when he realises truly (paramārthataḥ) that things have only a dreamlike or echolike existence. On the cessation of avidyā, the other links of the chain of causation<sup>2</sup> get no opportunity to arise and hence the person obtains Nirodha.

The Mahāyānists thus relegate the four Truths and the Causal Law to the domain of matters conventional and not real, and assert that they are necessary in the doctrines of Mahāyāna inasmuch as they serve as a means for the guidance of living beings, who, as individuals in this world, cannot but have their vision distorted or screened by ignorance.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Bodhic.*, pp. 350-1.

<sup>2</sup> Śāntideva speaks of the chain of causation as consisting of three parts, viz.,

(i) kleśakāṇḍa—avidyā, tṛṣṇā and upādāna ;

(ii) karmakāṇḍa—saṃskāra and bhava ; and

;(iii) duḥkhakāṇḍa—all the remaining links of the chain. For such divisions, see also Gokhale, *Pratītyasamutpādasūtra* of Ullaṅgha.

<sup>3</sup> The commentator of *Bodhic.* (p. 362), in order to show that the four Āryasatya are really two, says that duḥkha, samudaya, and mārga should be classified under saṃvṛti, and nirodha under paramārtha.



YOGĀCĀRA TREATMENT OF THE ĀRYASATYAS  
AND THE PRATĪTYASAMUTPĀDA

Nāgārjuna and Śāntideva explain the position of the Mādhyamikas with regard to the Four Truths and the Causal Law as shown above.

Asaṅga, Vasubandhu and other writers on the Yogācāra system deal with this topic incidentally. Asaṅga, for instance, refers to the four truths,<sup>1</sup> saying that the first two relate to the origin of the world or the happening of repeated births and the cause thereof, while the second two relate to the disappearance of things and the causes thereof. The first two need suppression while the second two need realisation. In connection with the fourteen ways of practising the smṛtyupasthānas (power of recollection) by Bodhisattvas, it is pointed out that one can enter, and also make others enter, into the four truths by means of the smṛtyupasthānas. Other Yogācāra writings, viz., the *Siddhi* and the *Laṅkāvatāra*, do not specifically refer to the four truths but they deal with the doctrines of the Hīnayānists for the sake of comparison and contrast. For instance, they speak of the Hīnayānists as those who maintain the overt sense of Buddha's teachings and not their deeper meaning;<sup>2</sup> being satisfied only with ascertaining the generic characteristics of things but never questioning about their essential unreality.<sup>3</sup> They labour under the misconception (parikalpanā) of taking the three worlds as real, of postulating distinctions as subject and object, of assuming the existence of skandhas (constituents of beings), dhātu (organs

<sup>1</sup> *Sūtrā.*, pp. 137-8, 149-1.

<sup>2</sup> *Laṅkā.*, p. 14: yathārutārthabhiniviṣṭā. For a description of the rutārthagrahi, see *Laṅkā.*, pp. 154f, 160f, 197, 227. *Laṅkā.* (p. 77) says, "sūtrāntaḥ sarvasattvāśayadeśanārthavyabhicāraṇī na sā tattvapratyavasthānakathā (the discourses are not faithful expositions of the truth because they were preached according to the mental tendencies of beings). For a remark like this, see *M. Vṛ.*, dealt with before; *Sūtrā.*, p. 51; alpaśrutatvaṃ nītārthasūtrāntaśravaṇāt.

<sup>3</sup> *Laṅkā.*, pp. 51, 71, 63: Yaḥ skandhadhātuvāyatanasvasāmānyalakṣaṇaparijñānādhigame deśyamāṇe romāñcitatanur bhavati. Lakṣaṇaparicayajñāṇe cāsyā buddhiḥ praskandati na pratītyasamutpādāvi-nirbhāgalakṣaṇaparicaye.



of sense), āyatana (spheres of the organs of sense), citta (mind), hetupratyaya (cause and condition), kriyāyoga (action), utpāda<sup>1</sup> (origin), sthiti (continuance), bhaṅga (dissolution), etc. The *Laṅkāvatāra*,<sup>2</sup> speaking of Pratītyasamutpāda, says that it is by comprehending that things originate through cause and condition that one can get rid of the misconception of taking non-existent things as existent, and of assuming gradual or simultaneous origin of things. Then it explains as usual that the dependent origination happens in two ways, externally and internally, e.g., an earthen pot, butter, sprout, etc., originate through an external cause (hetu)<sup>3</sup> and condition (pratyaaya), while ignorance (avidyā), desire (trṣṇā), action (karma), etc. originate through an internal cause and condition. The remarks of the Yogācāra writers indicate that the four truths and the causal law of the Hīnayānists belong to the domain of imagination (parikalpanā) and not to that of reality.

THE YOGĀCĀRAS HAVE THREE TRUTHS FOR TWO OF THE  
MĀDHYAMIKAS

It should be remembered that though the Yogācārins are sharply criticised by the Mādhyamikas<sup>4</sup> for their conception of the eighth consciousness called Ālaya-vijñāna (or store-consciousness), both these schools of thought agree in holding that all things (dharmas) are non-existent, and are without origin and decay,<sup>5</sup> and that the highest truth is unutterable (anākṣara),<sup>6</sup> is identical with thatness and unchangeableness, possesses the signs of anāyūha and niryūha (non-taking and non-rejection) and is beyond every possible means of determination<sup>7</sup>. Passages like this can be multiplied from the

<sup>1</sup> *Laṅkā.*, pp. 42, 43, 225.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 82-3, 84, 140.

<sup>3</sup> For six kinds of hetu, see *Laṅkā.*, p. 83.

<sup>4</sup> *M. Vṛ.*, p. 523.

<sup>5</sup> *Triṃśikā*, p. 41 : sarvadharmā niḥsvabhāvē anutpannā aniruddhā iti nirdeśyante.

<sup>6</sup> Buddhas are silent (mauna) and never preach a word. *Laṅkā.*, pp. 16, 17, 144, 194.

<sup>7</sup> *Laṅkā.*, p. 196 : Tathātvam ananyathātvam tattvam anāyūhaniryūha-lakṣaṇam sarvaprapañcopaśamaṃ; p. 73 : śūnyatānutpādādvaya-niḥsvabhāvalakṣaṇam.



Yogācāra works to show that their conception of the Reality, apart from Ālayaviññāna, is the same as that of the Mādhyamikas. They also hold with the Mādhyamikas<sup>1</sup> that from time immemorial, the mind has been under the delusion of imputing existence (sat) to non-existent things (asat), and that the Hīnayānists were not able to rid their minds completely of the four viparyāsas (misconceptions)<sup>2</sup> inasmuch as they meditated on Pudgalanimitta (individuality as basis) only and not on sarvadharmanimitta (all things whatsoever as basis) and conceived of Nirvāṇa as something existent<sup>3</sup>, full of peace and beyond misery. Their conception is that the highest truth, which they usually call Pariniṣpanna for the Paramārtha of the Mādhyamikas, is the realisation of the fact that all dharmas perceptible to our mind have no more existence than the images in a dream or the reflection of the moon in water.

From time immemorial, however, our minds are so deluded that we cannot help perceiving in the images or reflection something existent, or in other words, with our common knowledge we cannot rise above parikalpanā (imaginary existence), the samvṛti of the Mādhyamikas and others. The Yogācāras add a rider to the parikalpanā, saying that it depends for origination on something else, and hence it is always paratantra, the pratītyasamutpanna of the Mādhyamikas and others. It is not necessary that the basis of a parikalpanā need be anything existent or real, *e.g.*, a person may be frightened by an echo. In short, Parikalpita and Paratantra relate to worldly matters only, to the anitya, anātman and duḥkha of the Hīnayānists, while, pariniṣpanna relates to the Nirvāṇa, the Śānta<sup>4</sup>, *i.e.*, where all kleśas and vikalpas cease.

Asaṅga brings out the relation of the three forms of truth thus: The highest truth (paramārtha or pariniṣpanna) is non-duality, which is shown in five ways. Two of these are

<sup>1</sup> *M. Vr.*, Ch. XXIV quoting Dhyāyitamustisūtra.

<sup>2</sup> *Sūtrā.*, p. 169: Tatra caturviparyāsānugatam pudgalanimittam vibhāvayan yogī śrāvakabodhim pratyekabodhim vā labhate. Sarvadharmanimittam vibhāvayan mahābodhim.

<sup>3</sup> *Laṅkā.*, p. 72.

<sup>4</sup> *Sūtrā.*, p. 149; cf. *M. Vr.*, Ch. XVIII.



that it is non-existing under the aspect of Parikalpita and Paratantra and not non-existing under the aspect of Pariniṣpanna. It is not the same because the Parikalpita and Paratantra are not the same as Pariniṣpanna. It is not different, because the former two are not different from the latter<sup>1</sup>. In another connection Asaṅga says that a Bodhisattva can be truly called a śūnyajña (one who knows the real nature of non-existence) when he understands it under three aspects, viz., first, that the non-existence means the absence of signs which are commonly attributed to an imaginary object (parikalpita), secondly, that the non-existence is the absence of any particular form of existence that one imagines it to be (paratantra), and thirdly, that which is by nature non-existent (pariniṣpanna)<sup>2</sup>. The *Vijñaptimātratāsiddhi*<sup>3</sup> elucidates this point by saying that the nature of non-existence is of three kinds, viz., (i) lakṣaṇa-niḥsvabhāvatā (non-existence of the signs commonly attributed to a thing and hence of the thing itself, i.e., parikalpita), (ii) utpattiniḥsvabhāvatā (non-existence of a thing when considered from the standpoint of its origin, i.e., paratantra); and (iii) paramārthaniḥsvabhāvatā (non-existence of a thing in the highest sense, i.e., pariniṣpanna).

#### A. PARIKALPITA

Sthiramati, in commenting on the *Siddhi* says that the first category, Parikalpita, refers to the non-existence of things by its characteristics or signs. A thing cannot be conceived to exist unless it is accompanied by some characteristics, the sign of form is attributed to an object, or the sign of pain, pleasure, etc. is attributed to a feeling. Endless things which people imagine, not excluding the dharmas attributed to a Buddha, have existence only in one's imagination; hence they are parikalpita i.e. have nothing corresponding to them in reality. The *Laṅkāvatara*<sup>4</sup> says that the parikalpita existence is inferred from signs<sup>5</sup> (nimitta) and explains it thus: All dependently originating things are known by their nimitta (signs) and

<sup>1</sup> *Sūtrā.*, p. 22 : na san na cāsan na tathā na cānyathā, etc.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 94-5.

<sup>3</sup> *Siddhi*, pp. 39-42.

<sup>4</sup> *Laṅkā.*, p. 67.

<sup>5</sup> Prof. Lévi translates nimitta by "signs of connotation".



**lakṣaṇa** (characteristics)<sup>1</sup>. Now, things having **nimitta** and **lakṣaṇa** are of two kinds. Things known by **nimitta** only refer to things generally, internal and external, while things known by **nimitta-lakṣaṇa** refer to the knowledge of generic characteristics of things both internal and external<sup>2</sup>. **Asaṅga**<sup>3</sup> distinguishes **parikalpita** into three kinds: *viz.*, (i) the basis (**nimitta** or **ālambana**) of one's thought-constructions, (ii) the unconscious impression (**vāsanā**) left by them upon one's mind, and (iii) the denominations (**arthakhyāti**) following the impressions are taken as real.

#### B. PARATANTRA

The second category, **Paratantra**, refers to the imaginary existence pointed out above regarded from the aspect of its origin, *i.e.*, all objects or feelings, which have existence only in imagination, and depend for origination on something else (**paratantra**). Things as they appear are not the same as their origin or source; so it is said that the unreality of things is perceptible when they are viewed from the standpoint of their origin. Though the things, good, bad and indeterminate, or the three worlds (**dhātu**) or the mind and its various functions, have only imaginary existence, they arise, however, from causes and conditions, *i.e.* they depend for origin on others, and hence they cannot be said to exist really, because a real thing remains always the same and does not depend on cause and condition. The *Laṅkāvatāra* puts it very briefly thus: that which proceeds from a basis is dependently originated or **paratantra** (**yadāśrayāḷambanāt**

<sup>1</sup> *Laṅkā.*, pp. 224-6: five natures of existent things: (i) **nāma**, (ii) **nimitta**, (iii) **vikalpa**, (iv) **samyakjñāna**, and (v) **tathatā**.

**Nāma**—**saṃjñā**, **saṃketa**. Ignorant persons, deluded by various signs (**lakṣaṇa**), become attached to things as self or mine, and thus weave a net of thought-constructions around themselves.

**Nimitta**—the reflection (**ābhāsa**) of eye-consciousness known as form; so also the reflections of ear-consciousness, nose-c., tongue-c., body-c., mind-c. known as sound, smell, taste, touch and things are called **nimitta**.

**Nimitta** is more or less a sign impressed upon consciousness and **lakṣaṇa** is definition, or features constituting a definition.

<sup>2</sup> *Laṅkā.*, p. 67, 150, 163.

<sup>3</sup> *Sūtrā.*, p. 64.



pravartate tat paratantra). Asaṅga analyses the paratantra in this way: the mark of being paratantra is the false thought-construction (abhūtaparikalpaḥ) about subject (grāhaka) and its object (grāhya).<sup>1</sup>

#### C. PARINIṢPANNA

The third category, Pariniṣpanna, refers to the Paramārtha<sup>2</sup> (the highest truth) or Tathatā (Thatness). Like ākāśa (space) it is homogeneous (lit. has one taste—ekarasa), pure, and changeless. The Pariniṣpanna-svabhāva (absolute reality) is called Paramārtha because it is the highest aspect in which all dependently originated things are to be looked upon. In this sense, it can be called also dharmatā (the nature of things), or in other words, it is the Absolute, immanent in the phenomenal world. The *Siddhi* points out that the pariniṣpanna (the Absolute) is so called because it is absolutely changeless. If it be compared with the Paratantra, it may be said to be that paratantra which is always and ever completely devoid of the differentiations as subject and object, which are nothing but the mere play of imagination, and hence absolutely non-existing. Thus, it follows that the pariniṣpanna is the same as the paratantra minus the parikalpita.<sup>3</sup>

#### TWO TRUTHS IN HĪNAYĀNA

It is clear from the summarised discussions that the Paramārtha of the Mādhyamikas and the Pariniṣpanna of the Yogācāras indicate the Truth as conceived by them. Accepting that Truth as the only reality, they relegate everything else to the domain of unreality calling them conventional, saṃvṛti or parikalpita, with this reservation that the conventional things appear and disappear subject to causes and

<sup>1</sup> *Sūtrā.*, p. 65:

grāhaka=manas, 5 vijñānas and vikalpa;

grāhya=padābhāsa, arthābhāsa and dehābhāsa.

<sup>2</sup> For seven different kinds of Paramārtha, see *Lankā.*, p. 39.

<sup>3</sup> This exposition is based on the *Siddhi*, pp. 39–42. Masuda has utilised the Chinese version of this treatise, for which see his *Der individualistische etc.* pp. 40–43. For general discussion, see La Vallée Poussin, *E.R.E.*, sv. *Philosophy* (Buddhist); L. D. Barnett, *Path of Light* (Wisdom of the East Series), p. 102; Keith, *B. Phil.*, pp. 235–236; Sogen, *Systems etc.*, pp. 145, 146; Stcherbatsky, *Con. of N.*, p. 33.



conditions, or in other words, they conform to the law of causation, the Pratītyasamutpāda of the Buddhists in general, and the Paratantra of the Yogācāras.

The Hīnayānists utilise these expressions just as much as the Mahāyānists and they also call their Truth the only reality, *Paramattha*, everything else being conventional, *Sammuti*, their truth, in one word, being anattā, non-existence of any substantiality in the so-called things of the world, with the corollary that everything being anattā is impermanent (*anicca*) and unhappy (*dukkha*). Buddhaghosa<sup>1</sup> draws the distinction, saying that Buddhas use two kinds of speech, conventional and real. The expressions, *satta* (being), *puggala* (person), *deva* (god), *etc.* are conventional, while those like *anicca* (impermanence), *dukkha* (misery), *anattā* (essencelessness), *khandha* (aggregates), *dhātu* (organs of sense), *āyatana* (objects of sense), *satipaṭṭhāna* (practices of self-possession) and *sammappadhāna* (right exertion) were used in their true sense. Nāgasena explains that when Buddha said “I shall lead the saṅgha or the saṅgha is dependent on me,”<sup>2</sup> he used the expressions “I” and “me” in the conventional and not in the real sense. Ledi Sadaw<sup>3</sup> explains *sammuti-sacca* as those statements which are true by popular usage and are opposed to “inconsistency, and untruthfulness in speech” while *paramattha-sacca* are those which are established by the nature of the things and do not depend on opinion or usage. As an example he points out that when it is said “there is a soul,” it is conventionally true but ultimately false,<sup>4</sup> for the real ultimate truth is “there is no personal entity.” The latter is true in all circumstances and conditions, and does not depend for its validity on usage or popular opinion.<sup>5</sup> The contention of the Hīnayānists is that a name is usually given to constituted things; that name is conventional, *e.g.*,

<sup>1</sup> *Kvu. A.*, pp. 33, 84.

<sup>2</sup> *Mil.*, pp. 28, 60.

<sup>3</sup> *J.P.T.S.*, 1914, pp. 129 f.

<sup>4</sup> *Of. Stecherbatsky, Central Conception of Buddhism*: “Buddhism never denied the existence of a personality, or a soul, in the empirical sense; it only maintained that it was no ultimate reality.”

<sup>5</sup> See also Prof. Poussin’s article in the *J.A.*, 1902, p. 250; *Points of the Controversy*, pp. 63 fn., 180.



when the wheels, frame, and other parts of a chariot are fitted up in a particular order, all the things taken together go by the name of a chariot. The term 'chariot' therefore depends on convention. If the constituted thing, *e.g.*, the chariot is divided into various parts, it is no longer called a chariot when it is so divided. From this, it follows that the things, at which one ultimately arrives after repeated analysis, are the only real entities. They never undergo changes and bear the same name at all times and places and under all conditions. So, according to the Hīnayānists, all the various ultimate elements, which constitute a being or thing, are real, and when reference is made to them they may be called ultimate truths or paramattha-sacca; hence the dhātus or āyatanas, satipaṭṭhānas or sammappadhānas are expressions used in the ultimate sense.

The *Kośa*<sup>1</sup> explains the two truths in a slightly different manner. It says that the things like jug and clothes, after they are destroyed, do no longer bear the same name; so also things like water and fire when examined analytically dissolve into some elements and are no longer called water or fire. Hence the things, which on analysis are found to be changing, are given names by convention. Such expressions, which convey ideas temporarily and not permanently, are called Samvṛtisatyas. The Paramārthasatyas are those expressions, which convey ideas, which remain unchanged whether the things are dissolved, analysed or not, *e.g.*, rūpa; one may reduce the rūpa into atoms, or withdraw from it taste and other qualities, the idea of the real nature of rūpa persists. In the same way one can speak of feeling (vedanā); therefore such expressions are Paramārthasatyas (ultimate truths).

But these ultimate truths of the Hīnayānists, we have seen, are relegated by the Mahāyānists to the domain of convention. Hence, what are real according to the Hīnayānists, namely the Āryasatyas and the Pratītyasamutpāda, are unreal and matters of convention according to the Mahāyānists.

<sup>1</sup> *Kośa*, VI. 4.



## CHAPTER IV

### The Stages of Spiritual Progress

The difference between Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna, as we have already seen, centres round the conception of the highest truth, which, according to the Hīnayānists, is Pudgalaśūnyatā only, while, according to the Mahāyānists, it is both Pudgala- and Dharma-śūnyatā. This difference is also evident in the various stages of progress chalked out by the two schools. The Hīnayānists recognize four stages called Sotāpatti, Sakadāgāmi, Anāgāmi, and Arahatta, and mention specifically the attainments of an adept as he passes from one stage to another, obtaining in the last stage complete knowledge, which, according to them, is the same as that attained by Buddhas.<sup>1</sup> The Mahāyānists likewise recognize ten (according to the *Bodhisattvabhūmi* twelve) stages of progress, through which a Bodhisattva passes in order to have complete emancipation and become a Buddha.

As the Mahāyānists hold that an insight into dharma-śūnyatā is the only means of attainment of the highest knowledge, and that an insight into pudgalaśūnyatā equips an adept for proceeding higher up and realising dharma-śūnyatā, they divide their stages of progress into two sections. The first, comprising the first six bhūmis, leads an adept to the realisation of Pudgalaśūnyatā, while the second, comprising the last four bhūmis, gives him the real knowledge, Dharmaśūnyatā or Dharmasamatā. Thus, the first satisfies the aspiration of the Hīnayānists and hence corresponds to their four stages, while the second lies beyond their reach, as they do not admit Dharmasamatā.

Though this is essentially the relative position of the Hīnayānists and the Mahāyānists with regard to the stages of spiritual progress, one must, however, add to it the various other features, which are so often repeated by the

<sup>1</sup> See *ante*, p. 83



Mahāyānists about their chief aim being not so much to attain happiness and emancipation for their own selves as to enable the suffering millions of the world to attain happiness and escape from the misery of the world, even at the cost of the adepts' lives and religious merits. So while detailing the attainments necessary for each bhūmi, the texts point out the progress made by a Bodhisattva in regard to the Āśaya, Upadeśa, Prayoga, Upastambha and Kāla,<sup>1</sup> as also the Ākāra, Liṅga and Nimitta.<sup>2</sup> If these additional features of the Mahāyānic account of the first six bhūmis be left out, one may reasonably say that the description of the six bhūmis is simply a Sanskritised form of the Pāli passages, which deal with the stages of sanctification. Hence, the real addition of the Mahāyānists is the last four bhūmis, viz., Dūraṅgamā, Acalā, Sādhumatī, and Dharmameghā.

#### THE LITERATURE ON THE TOPIC

Regarding the literature on the subject, we may state that in Pāli there are no works dealing exclusively with the stages of sanctification. The accounts are found scattered in almost all the Pāli canonical works as well as in the few available Sanskrit works of the Sarvāstivādins. Buddhaghosa follows the scheme of spiritual progress in his *Visuddhimagga*. He divides it into three sections, of which the first deals with Sīla (moral precepts), the full observance of which results in the attainment of the first two stages, sotāpatti and sakadāgāmi; the second deals with Citta or Samādhi, which results in the attainment of the third stage Anāgāmi; and the third treats of Paññā (knowledge), perfection in which leads the adept to the final stage, Arahatta or complete emancipation.<sup>3</sup> Vasubandhu has dealt with the 'stages' in various places in his *Abhidharmakośa*,<sup>4</sup> supporting mostly, as we shall see later on, the accounts in the Pāli works.

In the Mahāyāna literature, there are a few treatises

<sup>1</sup> For the explanation of the terms, see *supra*, Ch. II, pp. 76 ff.

<sup>2</sup> *Bodhisattvabhūmi*, p. 2.

<sup>3</sup> *Vis. M.*, p. 6.

<sup>4</sup> *Kośa*, VI. 34 ff.



dwelling exclusively on the stages of progress while there are many which deal with them incidentally. Of the works treating mainly of the Bhūmis, the most important and at the same time comprehensive is the *Daśabhūmikasūtra*,<sup>1</sup> one of the nine recognised scriptural texts of the Nepalese Buddhists. The next in importance are the *Bodhisattvabhūmi*<sup>2</sup> and the *Madhyamakāvatāra*,<sup>3</sup> both following the *Daśabhūmikasūtra* with minor variations. For works containing an incidental treatment of the Bhūmis, we may refer to the *Laṅkāvatāra*, *Sūtrālaṅkāra* and other similar works. The *Prajñāpāramitās* (*Śatasāhasrikā* and *Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā*) devote a chapter exclusively to the treatment of the Bhūmis, though they do not omit to state that from the standpoint of the highest truth, they are devoid of any reality and are mere matters of convention.<sup>4</sup> The *Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā* again has a peculiar feature of its own. While speaking of the various practices followed by the Bodhisattvas in connection with their progress in the *Prajñāpāramitā*, it indicates many of the attainments by using expressions which are current among the Hīnayānists, e.g., Kulāṅkula, Ekavicika, Sotāpanna.<sup>5</sup> The *Śatasāhasrikā*<sup>6</sup> also gives us a list of ten Hīnayānic bhūmis, which are not in use in the Pāli texts. They are Śuklavipaśyanā (or vidarśanā) bhūmi,

<sup>1</sup> Edited by Dr. J. Rahder, 1926.

<sup>2</sup> A portion of the *Bodhisattvabhūmi* [Cambridge ms.—Vihāra-Pāṭala] has been published by Dr. Rahder as an Appendix to his *Daśa*. Dr. Rahder has very recently published an article 'La Carrière du Saint Bouddhique' in the *Bulletin de la Maison Franco-Japonaise*, Tome II, no. 1—Tokyo 1929. In it he has presented us with some new materials from the Chinese sources.

<sup>3</sup> The Tibetan version of this work has been edited by Prof. Poussin in the Bibl. Bud. Series, and a French translation of the first six chapters of the same has also been published by him in *Le Muséon*, vols. VIII, XI, and XII. A reconstruction of its Sanskrit text is now being published in the *Journal of Oriental Research*, 1929, 1930, Madras.

<sup>4</sup> *Sata.*, ch. X; *Pañca.*, Paris ms. fol. 122–8.

<sup>5</sup> This is the peculiar feature of the *Pañca.*, the Sanskrit original of which is available at present. It is a recast of the original *Pañca.* of which the Sanskrit original is lost. See *Appendix* and my *Intro. to Pañca.* for details.

<sup>6</sup> *Sata.*, pp. 1476, 1520=*Mvyut.* 50=Das's *Tib. Dict.*, p. 475.



Gotrabhūmi, Aṣṭamakabhūmi, Darśanabhūmi, Tanubhūmi, Vitarāgabhūmi, Kṛtāvībhūmi, Pratyekabuddhabhūmi, Bodhisattvabhūmi and Buddhabhūmi. The names clearly indicate the stages which they are intended to signify. The first two refer to the pre-sotāpanna stages, the third and the fourth to the sotāpattimagga and sotāpanna stages, *i.e.*, so long as the adept is in the darśanamārga, the fifth to sakadāgāmi, in which stage rāga, dveṣa and moha reach their minimum (tanutva), the sixth to the anāgāmi stage when the above three are completely eradicated, the seventh to the arahatta stage, when the adept completes all that is to be done, for which reason an Arahāt is often called kṛtakṛtya (having done what is to be done). The eighth, ninth and tenth are self-explanatory and need no comment. It should be noted that the treatment of the Bhūmis in the *Prajñāpāramitās* is much simpler than that of the *Daśabhūmikasūtra*, and very likely it represents a stage in the evolution of the Bhūmi conception, standing midway between the *Mahāvastu*<sup>1</sup> and the *Daśabhūmikasūtra*. The account of Bhūmis in the *Mahāvastu* appears to be the earliest. The names used are not the standard ones. From the name used in the *Bodhisattvabhūmi*, it seems that the writers on Bhūmis considered it a piece of literary skill to devise names indicative of the qualities attained by a Bodhisattva in a particular stage.<sup>2</sup> The description of

<sup>1</sup> The names in the *Mtu.* are: (i) Durārohā, (ii) Baddhamānā, (iii) Puṣpamaṇḍitā, (iv) Rucirā, (v) Cittavistarā, (vi) Rūpavatī, (vii) Durjayā, (viii) Janmanideśa, (ix) Yauvarājya and (x) Abhiṣeka.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Rahder says in his paper on *La Carrière du Saint Bouddhique* that the Chinese *Avatamsaka-sūtra* devotes a large section to the discussion of the career of a bodhisattva. He says that it speaks of 52 stages (or degrees), *viz.*, “10 especes de Foi + 10 Résidences (adhimukti) + 10 Conduites (ācāra) + 10 Déflexions + 10 Terres (Bhūmi) + Eveil égal + Eveil merveilleux.” These, it seems from their details, are only a form of classification of the bodhisattvas according to their qualities and do not indicate the gradual stages of spiritual progress. It is in the fifth item that we find mention of the Bhūmis (stages of progress). They are as given by Dr. Rahder in French, (i) Joyeuse; (ii) Immaculée; (iii) Clarifiante; (iv) Radieuse; (v) Dure-à-gagner; (vi) Droit-en-face; (vii) Va-loin; (viii) Immobile; (ix) Bon-Espirit; (x) Nuage d'Essence. These are exactly the same bhūmis as mentioned in the *Daśa.* and other works.



the bhūmis in the *Mahāvastu* is very scanty and does not contain the details which are important and even essential from the Mahāyānic standpoint. On the other hand, it mentions some disciplinary (vinaya) rules which a Bodhisattva is expected to observe, and the non-observance of which not only impeded his progress but brought about his fall to the next lower stage. In the accounts of the first three bhūmis, some traces of the description contained in the *Daśabhūmikasūtra* are found, but in the next seven, and specially in the last four, there is hardly anything more than a mere mention of the names of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas who attained them. It is apparent that the conception of bhūmis was very hazy to the author of the *Mahāvastu*, who tried to supply the gaps by recounting some legendary lives of Bodhisattvas and fictitious names of Buddhas.

For our present purpose of comparison between the Hīnayānic and Mahāyānic stages, we shall follow the account of the *Daśabhūmikasūtra*, indicating at places its agreements and disagreements with the *Bodhisattvabhūmi* and the *Madhyamakāvatāra*, and referring in the footnotes to the accounts of the *Mahāvastu* and the *Prajñāpāramitās*; while for the Hīnayānic stages, we shall depend mainly on the Pāli works, supplementing them where necessary by the information supplied by the *Kośa*.

### Pre-Bhūmi stages

PRE-BODHISATTVA OR PRE-SOTĀPANNA STAGE,  
(i.e. PRTHAGJANAHOOD TO ĀRYAHOOD)

The most difficult task of an adept both in Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna is the fulfilment of the conditions laid down for passing from the state of a prthagjana (ordinary man of the world) to that of an Ārya (a man capable of attaining the highest knowledge). The Mahāyānists demand that one must develop Bodhicitta before he can be entitled to commence the practices of bhūmis,<sup>1</sup> while the Hīnayānists hold that one must understand the Four Truths and

<sup>1</sup> *Bodhic.*, pp. 86 f.



have faith in the teachings of Buddha, or in other words, he must complete the fifteen kṣaṇas of the Darśanamārga to be able to drift himself along the stream (sota) of sanctification—the eightfold path.<sup>1</sup>

About the pre-Bodhisattva stage we come across very often in the *Prajñāpāramitās* and other Mahāyāna works a general remark that a being who has performed meritorious acts (avaropitakuśalamūla), served many previous Buddhas (pūrvaśīnakṛtādhikāra), and has had many kalyāṇamitras (spiritual guides) is destined to attain Bodhi.<sup>2</sup> In a slightly different manner the *Sūtrālaṅkāra*<sup>3</sup> says that a being who has developed Adhimukti<sup>4</sup> (aspiration) through innumerable æons, filled himself with merits as the sea is by water, gone through the preliminary purification by the observance of the Bodhisattva discipline, becomes wise by learning śāstras, and makes his mind soft and pliable,<sup>5</sup> is entitled to exert himself in bhāvanā (i.e. repeated darśana) and benefit by the teachings of Buddha.

#### ADHIMUKTICARYĀBHŪMI

It is in the *Madhyamakāvatāra* that we find mention of a pre-Bodhisattva stage called the Adhimukticaryābhūmi. The *Madhyamakāvatāra*,<sup>6</sup> quoting the *Ratnamegha-sūtra*, says that the bhūmi of the Bhaviṣyad (future) Bodhisattva is placed just before the first bhūmi and consists essentially of excessive (adhimātra-adhimātra) practices of the adhimukti (aspiration). He is a future Bodhisattva because he has not

<sup>1</sup> *Samyutta*, V, 347: soto soto ti ha Sāriputta vuccati; katamo nu kho Sāriputta soto ti? Ayam eva hi bhante ariyo atthaṅgiko maggo soto seyyathīdam sammādiṭṭhi pe. sammāsamādhī ti.

<sup>2</sup> *Pañca*. (A.S.B. ms.), leaves 204b, 223b, 232a. Cf. *Mtu.*, I, p. 57.

<sup>3</sup> *Sūtrā*., xiv. 1-3, p. 90. The *Sūtrā*. is mainly a treatise on the Bodhisattvacaryā. Its treatment is general and comprehensive. As we are here concerned mainly with the Bhūmis, we shall pass over the minor details.

<sup>4</sup> For a note on Adhimukti, see Lévi, *Translation of the Sūtrā*., p. 13 fn.

<sup>5</sup> For kalpacitta read kalyacitta, see Lévi, *Transl. of the Sūtrā*., p. 16 n.

<sup>6</sup> *Le Muséon*, VIII, p. 262.



yet developed Bodhicitta. He is therefore said to be in the Adhimukticaryābhūmi, *i.e.*, he has been aspiring to become a Buddha by following the doctrines of Mahāyāna. After hearing a religious discourse, or praises and accounts of the powers of a Buddha, he has only passing thoughts that he would become a Buddha, but unless and until this thought stays permanently in his mind, he cannot be said to possess Bodhicitta and become an Ārya, a Bodhisattva.<sup>1</sup>

The *Bodhisattvabhūmi* is more explicit with regard to the pre-bodhisattva stage; the technical name given by it is Prakṛticaryā.<sup>2</sup> It divides this stage into two, Gotravihāra<sup>3</sup> and Adhimukticaryāvihāra.<sup>4</sup> These two preparatory stages cannot be strictly called bhūmis. The *Daśabhūmikasūtra* and other treatises dealing with bhūmis do not therefore mention them in their list of bhūmis. They deal with or refer to the qualities needed in the pre-bodhisattva stage but do not reckon them as additional bhūmis as the *Bodhisattvabhūmi* does.

The Gotravihāra is thus described in the *Bodhisattvabhūmi*: A person who is gotrasta, *i.e.*, belongs by nature to a noble class of beings, is endowed with the qualities, high aims, and good dharmas of a Bodhisattva. They are apparent

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *E.R.E.*, II, p. 745.

<sup>2</sup> This is mentioned also in the *Mtu.* as the first of the four caryās.

<sup>3</sup> Vihāra-bhūmi. The corresponding Hīnayāna term is Gotrabhū, which is reckoned as a pre-sotāpanna stage. See *Aṅguttara*, IV, p. 373. The first two bhūmis, Śuklavipaśyanā and Gotra, mentioned in the *Sata.* (see *ante*, p. 240), also correspond to this.

<sup>4</sup> It is the same as the Adhimukticaryābhūmi of the *M. Ava.* The *Laṅkā.* (p. 65) speaks of the preparatory stage as Parikarmabhūmi. See *E.R.E.*, II, p. 744 for Parikarma and Upacāra bhūmis. In the *Sata.* (ch. x), Parikarma refers to the duties to be performed by a bodhisattva in a bhūmi.

The *Mtu.* (I, 46 f.) calls the corresponding bhūmis Prakṛticaryā and Praṇidhānacaryā. The former refers to the worldly virtues of being respectful to parents, śramaṇas and brāhmaṇas, performance of the ten kuśalakarmapathas, worship of Buddhas, *etc.* The latter (praṇidhānacaryā) refers to the aspiration felt by a bodhisattva to become Buddha and to achieve the same at any cost. The *Mtu.* gives also the legends about the present Buddha as to when and in what circumstances, he made the resolution (praṇidhāna).



in his natural demeanour. He sets himself to perform good deeds naturally, and does not require persuasion; he does the same with a certain amount of wisdom and feeling of charity. He possesses the seeds of Buddhadharmas and is incapable of committing evil deeds, not to speak of the deadly (*ānantarya*) sins.<sup>1</sup> The *gotravihāra* forms the root-cause (*hetumātra*) of the other eleven *vihāras*. It only makes it possible for one to exert himself for the attainment of the other *bhūmis* but does not carry him further.

The *Adhimukticaryāvihāra* is the name given to the first attempts made by a *Bodhisattva* to develop *Bodhicitta*, the noble aspiration. In this *bhūmi* the *Bodhisattva* actually starts on his march to the *Tathāgatavihāra*, while in the *Gotravihāra* he gives only an indication of same.<sup>2</sup> When he completes the duties of the *adhimukticaryā*, he can be said to have done the work preliminary to the first *bhūmi*, the *Pramuditā*. In the *Adhimukticaryāvihāra*, a *bodhisattva* practises *bhāvanās* in a limited degree, and is incapable of retaining what is acquired. He makes only an attempt for *nirnimitta-bhāvanā* (*i.e.*, meditation of the Absolute devoid of all signs).<sup>3</sup> He is possessed of *pratisamkhyābala* (power of discriminating knowledge) and applies himself to the duties of a *bodhisattva* with *pratisamkhyāna-prajñā* and not by natural *tanmayatā* (absorption). He cannot yet have the *Bodhisattva-bhāvanās*, which make one steadfast and non-receding. He is not above the five fears, *viz.*, of livelihood, dispraise, death, evil destiny (*durgati*) and censure by the assembly.<sup>4</sup> With *pratisamkhyā* he exerts himself for the good of beings and not out of natural love and compassion. Sometimes, he explains things wrongly and sometimes he interests himself in improper spheres or in the material requisites of life. He may have reverential faith (*śraddhā*) but no innate knowledge of truth. He possesses only limited

<sup>1</sup> For *ānantarya* sins, see *Kośa*, IV. 96; *Vibhaṅga*, p. 378.

<sup>2</sup> These two *vihāras* have a parallel in the two kinds of *Bodhicitta*, mentioned in the *Bodhic.*, *viz.*, *Bodhipraṇidhi* and *Bodhiprasthāna*. The *Bodhic.* puts these two after the development of *Bodhicitta*, see *infra*, p. 247.

<sup>3</sup> *B. Bh.*, p. 3.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *Aṅguttara*, IV, p. 364.



śrutamayī and cintāmayī prajñā (knowledge derived from hearing and reflection),<sup>1</sup> which again sometimes gets bewildered. He follows the bodhisattva-path with great difficulty and sluggish knowledge (dhandha-abhiññā) and does not develop a very strong desire for bodhi. Now and then he forgets the right means in which beings should be trained and even the Buddhavacana. Occasionally he imparts teaching incautiously and fails to produce the desired result. At times he takes away his mind from bodhi and loses energy for the observance of Bodhisattva-saṃvaras (disciplines) or for rendering service to beings. Sometimes he also seeks his own happiness, though after reflection he seeks the happiness of others as well. Not unoften he notices his own failings but lacks sufficient energy to correct them. He likes instruction in the Bodhisattva-dharmas but sometimes he gets frightened by the magnitude of the task. He is not endowed with all the bodhipakṣika-dharmas. These are the chief indications by which it can be ascertained whether or not a person is in the Adhimuktīcaryābhūmi.

The idea underlying the preparatory stage is that there are beings who possess to their credit such kuśalamūlas that they are destined to become Buddhas. These beings are called gotrasthas.<sup>2</sup> Just as a king's sons are different from those of a commoner by their inherent nature, demeanour, and aspiration, so also those beings who possess the germs of Buddhahood are known by their inherent superior qualities.

The *Daśabhūmikasūtra*<sup>3</sup> furnishes us with the details of the pre-bodhisattva stage which are on many points different from the account of the *Bodhisattvabhūmi*. Some of these details are as follows: They develop bodhicitta after having accumulated enough merits, followed the prescribed practices, worshipped many Buddhas, possessed pure and sublime intention and aspiration, and held compassion always in the

<sup>1</sup> See *Netti*, pp. 8, 60; *Kośa*, VI. 5c. Cf. Rahder, *La Carrière du Saint Bouddhique*, p. 5.

<sup>2</sup> See *Sūtrā.*, p. 11 for gotrāgratva. The *B. Bh.* devotes about six leaves to the details of the gotra; see Camb. Ms., leaves 1-6. For gotra, see also *ante*, pp. 84 ff.

<sup>3</sup> *Daśa.*, p. 11.



front of his mind. They are desirous of attaining the Buddha knowledge, the ten powers, the four great Vaiśāradyas, realising the sameness of all dharmas (things), rescuing all beings from misery, acquiring every form of knowledge, and purifying all Buddha-kṣetras.

These accounts depict the wavering mind of a person who is endeavouring to develop Bodhicitta. It is by the actual development of Bodhicitta<sup>1</sup> that a person gets rid of his prthagjanahood and becomes an Ārya or the Elect to proceed along the stream of sanctification.<sup>2</sup> Bodhicitta, in short, means the vow or aspiration of a being to become a Buddha and obtain all the qualities and powers of a Buddha. The *Bodhicaryāvatāra* divides it into two parts, Bodhipranidhicitta and Bodhiprasthānacitta. The former is simply an aspiration to become a Buddha for saving worldly beings from misery without seriously thinking of the duties of making the highest gifts, and such other virtues. The latter refers to the resolution to observe the Bodhisattva-saṃvaras (disciplines) and to strive for the acquisition of merits. The former is compared to a traveller who is thinking of going to another country, while the latter to one who has actually set out on his journey in order to reach the destination.<sup>3</sup> As soon as one develops bodhicitta, he is entitled to perform the duties connected with the first Bhūmi.<sup>4</sup>

#### HĪNAYĀNIC TREATMENT OF THE PRE-SOTĀPANNA STAGE

We have in the Hīnayānic works also an elaborate description of the qualities necessary for a person to pass from the puthujjana stage to the Ariya. Like the general state-

<sup>1</sup> The topic of Bodhicitta is of all-absorbing interest in most of the Mahāyāna works. The *Bodhic.* devotes to it its first three chapters, and its commentary quotes many sūtras throwing light on the same.

<sup>2</sup> See *E.R.E.*, II, p. 744; *M. Ava.* in the *Le Muséon*, VIII, p. 11: yena cittotpādena sahotpannena bodhisattvo 'tikrānto bhavati prthagjanabhūmim avakrānto bhavati bodhisattva-niyāmaṃ, etc.

<sup>3</sup> *Bodhic.*, pp. 23-5.

<sup>4</sup> According to the *Mtu.* (I, 78) a bodhisattva in the first bhūmi is still a prthagjana but he is prāptaphala and dakṣiṇeya.



ments in the *Prajñāpāramitās* about the previous kuśalamūlas of the bodhisattvas, we have also in the Pāli texts references to the previous merits (upanissaya) of a person seeking ordination or spiritual progress. It is often said in connection with the conversions made by Buddha that he delivered discourses after ascertaining the kusalamūlas (merit-roots or previous merits) of persons whose conversion he had in view. The usual passage is “satthā paccusakāle lokam volokento imassa kulaputtassa upanissayam addasa”<sup>1</sup> [the teacher at dawn looked round the world and saw the previous merits (lit. bases) of the man]. This implies that the real benefits of discourses cannot be derived by every body. It is only those, whose previous actions have raised them to a certain height, that derive benefits from the discourses. There are many instances in the Pāli works showing that a person had to have to his credit sufficient merits entitling him to become a sotāpanna after hearing only one discourse; there are also cases of persons becoming sakadāgāmi, anāgāmi, arahat or paccekabuddha by virtue of their stores of previous merits. The implication in such cases is that the persons in their previous lives had died after attaining the stage of sanctification, or its corresponding qualities, just preceding the one obtained by them in this life. The Hīnayānists hold that a pṛthagjana must have some kuśalamūlas before he can expect to be an ārya, i.e., a srotāpanna.<sup>2</sup>

A puthujjana is defined in the *Majjhima Nikāya* as one who labours under the delusion of “I-ness” and “Mine-ness” and thinks that he has rūpa, vedanā, etc. Not knowing the

<sup>1</sup> *Jāt.*, VI, p. 70; *Petavatthu Cy.*, p. 38. For references, see Childers' *Pāli Dictionary*, sv. upanissaya., also *P.T.S. Dictionary*.

<sup>2</sup> These kuśalamūlas are called mokṣabhāgiyas in the *Kośa*. They must be acquired in an existence prior to the attempt to acquire the nirvedhabhāgiyas (Pāli: nibbedhabhāgiya dhammas). See *Kośa*, IV, 125 fn.; VI, 24 fn.; *Dīgha*, III, p. 251 for Cha nibbedhabhāgiya saññā, or *Samyutta*, V, p. 345 for Cha vijjābhāgiya saññā, which are enumerated as follows: anicca saññā, anicce dukkhasaññā, dukkhe anattasaññā, pahāṇasaññā, virāgasaññā, nirodhasaññā. See *infra*, pp. 253-4.



true law, he develops attachment to things which he should avoid, and thereby produces and increases the āsavas (inflowing impurities) of kāma (desire), bhava (desire for existence) and avijjā (ignorance).<sup>1</sup> The *Puggala Paññatti*<sup>2</sup> simply says that a puthujjana is one who has neither got rid of the three saṃyojanas nor applied himself to get rid of them. The *Paṭisambhidāmagga*<sup>3</sup> tells us that the puthujjanas, who are striving to be ariyas, try to be indifferent to the saṅkhārās by looking upon them as anicca, dukkha and anattā but this indifference of theirs does not stay permanently in their minds and sometimes even appears distasteful to them.

The stage next to Puthujjana is Gotrabhū, corresponding in some respects to the Gotravihāra of the *Bodhisattva-bhūmi*.<sup>4</sup> The Gotrabhū represents the last state of a puthujjana, for a person becomes gotrabhū when he is just fit to commence the works which make a person an ariya. The *Paṭisambhidāmagga*<sup>5</sup> takes gotrabhū not only as a stage prior to sotāpanna but also as indicating a class of persons who are on the way to arhathood and may be in possession of one of the eight maggas and phalas. Likewise the *Abhidhammatthasaṅgaha*<sup>6</sup> places the Gotrabhū stage after Paṭipadā-ñāṇadassana-visuddhi (the purity of insight with regard to the path)<sup>7</sup> and Vuṭṭhānagāminivipassanā-ñāṇam (discernment leading to uplift) and makes the Gotrabhū an ariya, i.e. a sotāpattimaggaṭṭha. In the two works mentioned last, Gotrabhū denotes those persons, who are on the path and are entitled to become Arhats, and hence persons in any

<sup>1</sup> *Majjhima*, I, pp. 7, 239. It will be observed that the fourth āsava is not mentioned here. An arahat in contrast to puthujjana is called a khīṇāsava. See also *Paṭis. M.*, pp. 117-8.

<sup>2</sup> *Pug. P.*, p. 12. See *Comp. of Phil.*, pp. 49-50 for the four classes of Puthujjanas.

<sup>3</sup> *Paṭis. M.*, I, pp. 63, 64, 94.

<sup>4</sup> See *ante*, pp. 244-5.

<sup>5</sup> *Paṭis. M.*, I, pp. 66-8.

<sup>6</sup> *Comp. of Phil.*, pp. 67-71, 129, 215 (treated in detail by Mrs. Rhys Davids in the Introduction).

<sup>7</sup> Buddhaghosa also supports this. See *Vis. M.*, p. 672: Ito (Paṭipadāñāṇadassanavisuddhi) param gotrabhūñāṇam hoti.



one of the three stages, sotāpatti, sakadāgāmi, and anāgāmi.<sup>1</sup> The *Anguttara Nikāya*<sup>2</sup> and the *Puggala Paññatti*,<sup>3</sup> however, do not consider the Gotrabhū an ariya and hence they distinguish Gotrabhū as a stage preceding the Sotāpattimagga.

Those who are between Gotrabhū and Sotāpanna (i.e. sotāpattiphalapaṭipanna) are divided into two classes, called Saddhānusārī and Dhammānusārī.<sup>4</sup> They still practise the Darśanamārga. According to the *Kośa*, the former are of mild (mr̥du) and the latter of sharp (tīkṣṇa) faculties. The Śraddhānusārīs are those who follow the dharma through faith in their spiritual guide, or in other words, they take to the practice of smṛtyupasthāna, etc., and work for the realisation of the Truth by being incited by others (para-pratyayena), while the Dharmānusārīs are those who set themselves to practise the Bodhipakṣika dharmas through the study of the scriptures (dvādaśāṅga).<sup>5</sup> The *Puggala Paññatti* simply says that, of the persons who are working for the realisation of sotāpattiphala, those who have saddhindriyaṃ (faculty of faith) in a great measure (adhimattam) are called Saddhānusārī, while those who have paññindriyaṃ (faculty of paññā) in a great measure are called Dhammānusārī. The persons of the former class, when established in the sotāpattiphala, are called Saddhāvimutta and those of the latter class are called Diṭṭhippatta. The only difference between these two classes is this that the former destroys some of his āsavas but not as much as the latter.<sup>6</sup> For progressing along the path to Nibbāna, there are (i) two dhuras (courses)—saddhā (faith) and paññā (knowledge), (ii) two abhinivesas (adherences)—samatha (quietude)<sup>7</sup> and

<sup>1</sup> *Comp. of Phil.*, p. 68.

<sup>2</sup> *Anguttara*, IV, p. 378.

<sup>3</sup> *Pug. P.*, p. 14: Atṭha ariyapuggalā ariyā, avasesā puggalā anariyā. Cf. *Infra*, p. 255.

<sup>4</sup> *Pug. P.*, p. 15; *Kośa*, VI, 29, 63; *Dīgha*, III, p. 105; *Samyutta*, V, pp. 200, 205; *Vis. M.*, p. 659.

<sup>5</sup> *Kośa*, VI, 29. Prof. Poussin has kindly drawn my attention to the fact that the Dvādaśāṅga is mentioned only in the *Vyākhyā* in explanation of the term 'Dharma' of the *Kośa*.

<sup>6</sup> *Pug. P.*, 15: paññāya c'assa disvā ekacce āsavā parikkhīṇā honti na ca kho yathā diṭṭhippattassa. See also *Kośa*, VI, 63.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Geiger, *Samyutta Transl.*, II, p. 172. See also *DhP.*, A., I, p. 7:



vipassanā (introspection), and (iii) two sisas (heads)—ubhatobhāgavimutta (one who is free in both ways) and paññāvimutta (free by reason of paññā).<sup>1</sup> The followers of Paññādhura and Samathābhinivesa are called Dhammānusārī in the sotāpattimagga stage, Kāyasakkhī<sup>2</sup> in the next six, and Ubhatobhāgavimutta in the arhat stage; the followers of Paññādhura but Vipassanābhinivesa are called Dhammānusārī in the sotāpattimagga stage, Ditṭhippatta<sup>3</sup> in the next six, and Paññāvimutta<sup>4</sup> in the arhat stage. The followers of Saddhādhura and Samathābhinivesa<sup>5</sup> are called Saddhānusārī in the sotāpattimagga stage, Kāyasakkhī in the next six, and Ubhatobhāgavimutta<sup>6</sup> in the arhat stage; the followers of Saddhādhura but Vipassanābhinivesa are called Saddhānusārī in the sotāpattimagga stage, Saddhāvimutta<sup>7</sup> in the next six, and Paññāvimutta in the arhat stage.<sup>8</sup>

Those who are either Saddhānusārī or Dhammānusārī reach the second stage<sup>9</sup> of the ariyamagga called sotāpatti-phala, also called sattakkhattuparama (*i.e.*, they are to have seven more births). Mention is made of specific qualities, which an adept must possess in order to become a sotāpanna. In the *Samyutta Nikāya*,<sup>10</sup> Sāriputta asks Ānanda, “How many are the dhammas which one must give up as well as one must acquire for being a sotāpanno avinipātadhammo

granthadhura (way of study) and vipassanādhura (way of contemplation).

<sup>1</sup> *Pug. P. Cy.*, p. 194; *Dīgha*, II, p. 71.

<sup>2</sup> Kāyasakkhī is defined in the *Aṅguttara* (IV, pp. 451–2) as implying those who realise within their own body (kāyena phassitvā) the eight jhānas (or vimokkhas) and also destroys āsavas by paññā.

<sup>3</sup> Ditṭhippatta is described in the *Pug. P.*, (p. 15) as referring to those who know truly the four truths, and put an end to āsavas by comprehending the dharma of the Tathāgata by paññā.

<sup>4</sup> See *infra*.

<sup>5</sup> *Pug. P. Cy.* reads samādhi for samatha.

<sup>6</sup> See *infra*.

<sup>7</sup> Saddhāvimutta (*Pug. P.*, p. 15) are similar to Ditṭhipatta; only the paññā of the former is not as much as that of the latter.

<sup>8</sup> *Pug. P. Cy.*, pp. 194–5. See also *Kośa*, VI, 63, 64.

<sup>9</sup> The first stage being sotāpattimagga comprised the two classes called Saddhānusārī and Dhammānusārī.

<sup>10</sup> There is a chapter called Sotāpatti-samyutta in the *Samyutta*, V, pp. 264, 362–3, 388 = *Dīgha*, III, p. 227.



niyato sambodhiparāyaṇo (a sotāpanna gone beyond the possibility of retrogression and destined to attain the highest knowledge).” The reply of Ānanda was that one must have firm faith (pasāda) in Buddha, Dhamma, and Saṅgha<sup>1</sup> and must be endowed with all the sīlas liked and praised by the wise. They are called the Sotāpattiyaṅgas.<sup>2</sup> One who has the four Sotāpattiyaṅgas is considered free of five sins, viz., killing, stealing, misconduct, lying, and drinking.<sup>3</sup> The *Samyutta Nikāya* also tells us that when an ariyasāvaka knows the taste, the dangers and the way out of the indriyas, viz., sukha, dukkha, somanassa, domanassa and upekkhā, he is a sotāpanna.<sup>4</sup> In a discourse in connection with the illness of Anāthapiṇḍika, it is said that the puthujjana was expected also to comply as far as possible with the eight conditions of the atthaṅgikamagga plus the sammāñāṇa and sammāvimutti,<sup>5</sup> besides the four sotāpattiyaṅgas. The sotāpattiyaṅgas, in fact, are merely preliminaries, though essential, to the actual commencement of practices for attaining the sotāpatti stage. The duties entailed upon a candidate just after the sotāpattiyaṅgas are a further increase in pīti (pleasure), pāmojja (joy), passaddhi (calmness), samādhi (concentration), and the practice of the cha vijjā- (or nibbedha-) bhāgiya dhammas (six dharmas leading to knowledge), viz., the

<sup>1</sup> There is a formula for announcing the faith, see *Dīgha*, III, p. 227. The faith is called Saddhindriya, *Samyutta*, V, p. 196. *Paṭis. M.*, p. 161: Ye keci mayi aveccapasannā sabbe te sotāpannā. See *Kośa*, VI, 73b; 34, p. 205 fn: La pureté de la conduite (prayoga): règles de moralité (sīlāni) chères aux Āryas; pureté des sentiments (āśaya): avetyaprasāda.

<sup>2</sup> The other four sotāpattiyaṅgas, very rarely found, are: (i) sappurisasamsevā, (ii) saddhammasavanam, (iii) yoniso manasikāro, and (iv) dhammānudhammapaṭipatti, *Samyutta*, V, pp. 345, 411; *Dīgha*, III, p. 227; *Paṭis. M.*, II, p. 17 shows the connection between these and the indriyas.

<sup>3</sup> *Samyutta*, II, pp. 68-71.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, V, p. 207; *Paṭis. M.*, I, pp. 115-6 It says “Anaññātāññās-sāmītindriyaṃ ekam tṥānam gacchati, sotāpattimaggaṃ and then tells of the position of the indriyas. It adds that in the sotāpattimagga-kkhaṇa, except the things already existing, all thoughts that arise are pure, transcendental, and lead to Nibbāna.

<sup>5</sup> *Samyutta*, V, pp. 381-4.



realisation (anupassanā) of (i) transitoriness (anicca) of constituted things, (ii) unhappiness (dukkha) due to transitoriness, (iii) essencelessness (anatta) of things; (iv) giving up (pahāṇa), (v) virāga (detachment), and (vi) nirodha (cessation).<sup>1</sup> The *Nikāyas* do not go into details about the attempts of a candidate in the sotāpanna stage to comprehend the anicca, anattā and dukkha or the four āryasatyas. In the *Dīgha Nikāya* there is only a bare mention of the four ñāṇas viz., dukkhe ñāṇam, nirodhe ñāṇam, samudaye ñāṇam, and magge ñāṇam.<sup>2</sup> An exposition of these has been given in the *Paṭisambhidāmagga*,<sup>3</sup> which says that when one has “understanding, search, research, discernment, discrimination, etc. of each of the four truths, he is said to have comprehended the four truths.” This topic has received special treatment in the *Kośa*,<sup>4</sup> which may be briefly stated. There are two mārgas, darśana and bhāvanā,<sup>5</sup> the latter commencing at the last stage of darśanamārga. The darśanamārga has sixteen kṣaṇas or moments of comprehension of the truths,<sup>6</sup> which are as follows:—

<sup>1</sup> *Samyutta*, V, p. 345; *Dīgha*, III, p. 251; *Kośa*, Intro. to chs. V and VI, p. iv, as Prof. Poussin shows, puts the order of progress in the pre-sotāpanna stage as follows:—

- (i) Acquisition of the Mokṣabhāgiya-kuśalamūlas;
- (ii) Acquisition of the Ariyavaṃsas (*Kośa*, VI, 7c-d; 8a-b; *Aṅguttara*, II, p. 27; *Dīgha*, III, p. 224—rules relating to the requisites of a monk);
- (iii) Aśubhabhāvanā, Ānāpānasmṛti;
- (iv) Practice of Smṛtyupasthānas;
- (v) Acquisition of the Nirvedhabhāgiyadharma;
- (vi) Satyābhisamaya (15 kṣaṇas)—darśanamārga.

There are many details which should be mentioned in an exposition of the path of spiritual progress, but as we are concerned here mainly with the comparison of the Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna stages, the details have been passed over.

<sup>2</sup> *Dīgha*, III, p. 227.

<sup>3</sup> *Paṭis. M.*, I, p. 119. See for translation of this stock passage, Mrs. Rhys Davids' *Buddhist Psychology*, p. 18.

<sup>4</sup> Prof. Poussin has given a summary of it in the Intro. to his transl. of the *Kośa*, chs. V and VI; *M. Vr.*, p. 479, n. 4.

<sup>5</sup> Bhāvanāmārga is seeing the Truths again and again. See *Kośa* Intro. to chs. V and VI, p. vi.

<sup>6</sup> See *Kośa*, VI, 261; VII, 4.



- |                              |                                 |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1) Duḥkhe dharmajñāna-kṣānti | (faith producing the knowl-     |
| 5) Samudaye do.              | edge that things of the         |
| 9) Nirodhe do.               | Kāmadhātu are full of           |
| 10) Mārge do.                | duḥkha, are subject to          |
|                              | samudaya and nirodha, and       |
|                              | that there is also the mārga    |
|                              | to the origin and cessation     |
|                              | of things).                     |
| 2) Duḥkhe dharmajñāna        | (actual realisation of the      |
| 6) Samudaye do.              | fact that things of the         |
| 10) Nirodhe do.              | Kāmadhātu are full of           |
| 14) Mārge do.                | duḥkha, are subject to samu-    |
|                              | daya and nirodha, and that      |
|                              | there is also the mārga lead-   |
|                              | ing to their origin and cess-   |
|                              | ation).                         |
| 3) Duḥkhe anvayaññāna-kṣānti | (faith producing the knowl-     |
| 7) Samudaye do.              | edge that things of the         |
| 11) Nirodhe do.              | Rūpa and Arūpa dhātus           |
| 15) Mārge do.                | are full of duḥkha, are subject |
|                              | to samudaya and nirodha,        |
|                              | and that there is also a        |
|                              | mārga leading to their ori-     |
|                              | gin and cessation).             |
| 4) Duḥkhe anvayaññāna        | (actual realisation of the      |
| 8) Samudaye do.              | fact that things of the Rūpa    |
| 12) Nirodhe do.              | and Arūpa dhātus are full       |
| 16) Mārge do.                | of duḥkha, are subject to       |
|                              | samudaya and nirodha, and       |
|                              | that there is also a mārga      |
|                              | leading to their origin and     |
|                              | cessation) <sup>1</sup> .       |

The *Kathāvatthu* shows the stages of gradual progress of a srotāpattiphalapratipannaka while he is in the darsana-mārga thus :

<sup>1</sup> The order of the kṣaṇas is to be made out from the number prefixed to each of the sixteen kṣaṇas. For a list, see *Mvyut.* 56 ; and for detailed exposition, see *Kośa*, VII, 8, p. 13n.



By Dukkhadassana, he gives up partially and not completely sakkāyadiṭṭhi, vicikicchā and sīlabbataparāmāsa and the kilesas involved in them.	He is not yet quite Sotāpanna or Sattakhattuparama or Kolaṅkola or Ekabījī.
By Samudayadassana, he gives up sakkāyadiṭṭhi completely, and the other two partially, and so also the kilesas.	Do.
By Nirodhadassana, he gives up vicikicchā completely and sīlabbataparāmāsa partially, and so also the kilesas.	Do.
By Maggadassana, he gives up sīlabbataparāmāsa completely and the kilesas partially.	He is now a Sotāpanna <sup>1</sup> .

The *Kośa* tells us that a candidate while progressing along these kṣaṇas is called Śraddhānusārī, Dharmānusārī or Srotāpattiphalapratipannaka up to the fifteenth kṣaṇa. It is in the sixteenth moment that he is considered established (sthita) in the sotāpattiphala and he may now be said to have obtained the catuḥsatyābhisamaya. This attainment, or in other words, the completion of the Darśanamārga frees him from the avastuka kleśas, viz., satkāyadrṣṭi, etc., and makes him an Ārya, i.e., a person entitled to let himself flow along the stream of sanctification—the eightfold path. He is no more to be called Śraddhānusārī or Dharmānusārī. He is now a Srotāpanna<sup>2</sup>.

The pre-Ārya stage, in fact, decides the path which a candidate is to follow. If one aspires only to mokṣa or nirvāṇa and accumulates kuśalamūlas of not a very high excellence as the Hīnayānists do, he is a Śrāvaka and if he aspires to Buddhahood in order to become the rescuer of the world, i.e., develops Bodhicitta and accumulates kuśala-

<sup>1</sup> *Kvu.*, I, p. 164 leaves this point doubtful, but all the passages mentioned there support the inference drawn above.

<sup>2</sup> *Kośa*, VI, 25fn., 53c-d; *Paṭis. M.*, I, p. 69 adds that the adept gives up all micchādiṭṭhi, micchāsankappa, etc., and takes sammādiṭṭhi, sammāsankappa, etc.



mūlas which only an exceedingly rare person can, he is a Bodhisattva.

#### I. PRAMUDITĀ

An adept as soon as he brings his mind up to the pitch described above<sup>1</sup> goes beyond the prthagjanabhūmi (plane of an ordinary being) and becomes definitely a bodhisattva. He can now be regarded as a member of the Tathāgata family,<sup>2</sup> becomes irreproachable (anavadya) by any taint relating to birth (sarvajātivādena), ceases from worldly existences, proceeds on in the transcendental existences, becomes established in the bodhisattvadharmatā and well established in the rank of a bodhisattva, comprehends sameness, and is destined to be included in the family of Tathāgatas of all times (past, present and future) and ultimately attains Sambodhi. Such bodhisattvas while in this bhūmi have prāmodya (joy), prasāda (faith), prīti (pleasure), utplāvanā (elation), udagrī (exaltation), usī (fragrance), utsāha (energy), and become asaṃrambha (devoid of pride), avihimsā (devoid of malice) and akrodha (devoid of anger). The Jinaputras become joyous on remembering the Buddhas, their dharmas, the Bodhisattva practices, the pāramitā purifications, etc.<sup>3</sup> They are pleased also because they know that they are out of worldly matters, nearing the Buddhabhūmi, the Jñānabhūmi, and cut off from births in hell or any lower form of existence. They are the refuge of all beings, and are always within the close view of the Tathāgatas. They are devoid of all sorts of fear<sup>4</sup> because they have no love for self or for things. They do not expect any service from others; on the other hand, they are prepared to render service to all beings. As they have no conception of self, they cannot have any fear of death, as they know that when they are dead, they will always be with Buddhas and Bodhisattvas.

<sup>1</sup> *Kośa*, VI. 31a-b: He is now either a kāyasākṣī or dṛṣṭiprāpta or śraddhāvimukta, see *ante*, pp. 250, 251.

<sup>2</sup> See *infra*.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *B. Bh.*, p. 7; 'Abhisamayālaṅkāra-loka' in the *Kośa*, VI. 26, p. 181 fn.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 7.



Then the Bodhisattvas having sublime aspiration and mahākaruṇā as their forethought engage themselves in the attainment of further merits. On account of their having in a greater degree śraddhā, prasāda, adhimukti, avakalpanā, kṛpākaruṇā, mahāmaitrī and having a firm mind endowed with hrī, apatrāpya, kṣānti, sauratya, and admiration for the doctrines, and being helped by spiritual guides (kalyāṇamitras) they become well-established in the first bhūmi. They now take the following mahāpraṇidhānas (resolutions)<sup>1</sup>—

(i) to perform the worship of Buddhas in every possible manner and as completely as possible ;

(ii) to preserve and protect the doctrines of Tathāgatas ;

(iii) to watch the Buddhotpādas of all the worlds and to accompany the Bodhisattvas in their last existence from their descent from the Tuṣita heaven up to their mahāparinirvāṇa ;

(iv) to practise all the bhūmis along with the pāramitās ;

(v) to ripen all beings and help them in attaining omniscience ;

(vi) to purify all Buddhakṣetras by paying them visits ;

(vii) to comprehend the endless distinctions that exist in the things of all lokadhātus ;

(viii) to persuade all bodhisattvas to develop the one aspiration and collect merits therefor, and to realise the one and the same basis of all bodhisattvas, to attend upon all Buddhas, to see Buddhotpādas whenever wished for, to pass through the various forms of existence with his own body, to be accomplished in the doctrines of Mahāyāna and to propagate Mahāyāna ;

(ix) to perform the duties of a bodhisattva, to do righteous acts by body, speech, and mind, to realise the Buddhadharma all at once, to remove afflictions by faith, to obtain a body like that of the Mahābhaisajyarāja or be like the wish-fulfilling gem and to obtain speech which will never be fruitless ; and

(x) to attain Sambodhi in all lokadhātus, to take without

<sup>1</sup> See *Sikṣā.*, pp. 291-5 = *Daśa.*, p. 14 = *B. Bh.*, p. 8; *Sūtrā.* (Fr. Transl.), p. 36n; Suzuki, *Outlines etc.*, pp. 308-310; *E.R.E.*, sv. Bodhisattva (based on the *Bodhisattvabhūmi*) and is not the same as *Daśa.*; *Dharmasaṅgraha*, cxii: Praṇidhānam trividham.



moving a hairbreadth from the right path his birth as an ordinary human being, to retire from the world, perform miracles, attain bodhi under the bodhi-tree, preach the dhamma-cakra and attain ultimately the mahāparinirvāṇa.<sup>1</sup>

While in the Pramuditā bhūmi, the Bodhisattvas take innumerable praṇidhānas, of which the ten mentioned are the chief. They now pity the countless beings, who are led by wrong views and blinded by ignorance, desire and so forth, repeatedly born in the three worlds and, according to the chain of causation, increase their stores of misery. They try to establish themselves in Nirvāṇa, the extreme happiness (atyantasukha).<sup>2</sup>

While in the first bhūmi they develop compassion and love and apply themselves to mahātyāga (i.e. giving up everything) of ordinary wealth, sons, wives, etc. They seek again and again the worldly and transcendental things and thus become versed in all śāstras and are consequently able to judge what is good and what is evil for beings. They become lokañña<sup>3</sup>. By constant worship and observance of śāsana (doctrines), they possess the ten qualities needed for the purification of the ten bhūmis,<sup>4</sup> viz., faith (śraddhā), compassion (karuṇā), love (maitrī), sacrifice (tyāga), patience to withstand distress (kheadasahiṣṇutā), knowledge of scriptures (śāstraññatā), knowledge of the world (lokaññatā), modesty, bashfulness, steadiness and the ability of performing the worship of the Tathāgatas.<sup>5</sup> They now see many Buddhas and worship them with all the necessary requisites, show respect to their Saṅghas and transfer the merit thus acquired to the attainment of Sambodhi.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Mtu.*, I, pp. 47 ff.

<sup>2</sup> *Daśa.*, p. 18; *B. Bh.*, p. 9.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *B. Bh.*, p. 9.

<sup>4</sup> *Mtu.*, I, p. 78 has tyāga, karuṇā, aparikheda, amāna, sarvaśāstrā dhyāyitā, vikrama, lokānujñā, and dhṛti. *Sata.* (p. 1454) has adhyāśa-ya, sarvasattvasamacittatā, tyāga, kalyāṇamitrāsevanā, dharmaparyeṣṭi, abhīkṣṇanaiṣkramya, buddhakāyasprhā, dharmavivarāṇa, mānastambhananirghātana, satyavacana. For an explanation of these terms, see *Sata.*, pp. 1458-1460. It will be observed that all the attainments mentioned in the *Mtu.* and *Sata.* appear in the account of the *Daśa.* Cf. *B. Bh.*, p. 9: daśa vihārapariśodhakā dharmā.

<sup>5</sup> *Daśa.*, p. 19; *B. Bh.*, p. 9. *Mtu.*, I, p. 78 mentions these eight qualities in connection with the first bhūmi.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. *B. Bh.*, pp. 9-10.



They gain the power to ripen beings through gifts (dāna) and affable words (priyavadya) and adhimukti (strong desire). Over and above these, they gain the other two samgrahavastus<sup>1</sup> (elements of popularity) but not yet the insight into the unlimited knowledge. Of the ten pāramitās,<sup>2</sup> their dānapāramitā is of an extraordinary nature. A bodhisattva who has attained the first bhūmi is entitled to become a king of Jambudvīpa and be a righteous ruler with mind always turned towards Buddha, Dharma and Saṅgha, and the bodhisattva practices and omniscience. Wishing to become a leader of men, he renounces the world, takes ordination<sup>3</sup> and in a moment enters into a hundred samādhis, sees a hundred Buddhas, traverses over a hundred lokadhātus and performs other extraordinary things.

#### CORRESPONDENCE OF BHŪMIS WITH MAGGAS AND PHALAS

The Hīnayāna system does not offer any parallel to the first bhūmi of the Mahāyānists, for it has no concern with Bodhicitta, Praṇidhānas, Maitrī, Karuṇā, and the ten qualities needed by a bodhisattva for fortifying himself to march along the ten bhūmis. It is from the second bhūmi that the Hīnayāna system offers a parallel to the Mahāyānic stages of progress. The *Bodhisattvabhūmi*<sup>4</sup> and the *Madhyamakāvatāra*<sup>5</sup> notice this fact in their treatment of the bhūmis.

In the Hīnayāna system a very common way of speaking about the various stages of progress is that an adept by complying with the rules of Adhiśīla<sup>6</sup> (entire moral precepts) becomes a Sotāpanna and Sakadāgāmi, by complying with the rules of

<sup>1</sup> *Mvyut.* 35: dānaṃ priyavāditā arthacaryā samānārthatā; see also *Lal. Vis.*, p. 38; *Daśa.*, p. 22; *B. Bh.*, p. 10.

<sup>2</sup> *Mvyut.* 34 gives a list of ten. This is common in Pāli works.

<sup>3</sup> *Of. Sata.*, p. 1459: Tathāgata-śāsane pravrajati. See *infra*, p. 270.

<sup>4</sup> See Rahder's edition in the App. to *Daśa.*, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup> *M. Ava.*, ch. I (*Le Muséon*, VIII).

<sup>6</sup> The Aṭṭhaṅgika Magga is arranged thus:

Sīla = Sammāvācā, °kammanta, and °ājīva.

Citta or Samādhi = Sammāsaṅkappa, °vāyāma, °sati, °samādhi.

Paññā = Sammādiṭṭhi. See, e.g., *Vis. M.*, pp. 4, 510; *Dīgha*, III, p. 219



Adhicitta, an Anāgāmi, and by those of Adhipaññā, an Arhat. So we can name the Hīnayāna stages also as (1) Puthujjana but Gotrabhū, (2) Adhisīla, (3) Adhicitta, and (4) Adhipaññā.<sup>1</sup> If we now compare with these the Mahāyānic bhūmis as named in the *Bodhisattvabhūmi*, the relation of the Hīnayānic to Mahāyānic bhūmis becomes apparent. They are as follows: (1) Gotra-Vihāra, (2) Adhimukticaryā-Vihāra, (3) Pramuditā-Vihāra, (4) Adhisīla-Vihāra,<sup>2</sup> (5) Adhicitta-Vihāra, (6), (7) and (8) Adhiprajñā-Vihāra, (9) Sābhisamṣkāra-sābhoga-nirnimitta-Vihāra, (10) Anābhoga-nirnimitta-Vihāra, (11) Pratisamvid-Vihāra, and (12) Parama-Vihāra. Of these twelve Vihāras, we have already dealt with the first two, the preparatory Bhūmis,<sup>3</sup> which are, as a rule, not included in the usual list of bhūmis, and correspond to the Hīnayānic Puthujjana or pre-Sotāpanna stage. Hence, if they be left out, we have the usual ten bhūmis. Evidently the five bhūmis (4–8 of the *Bodhisattvabhūmi*, and 2–6 of the *Daśabhūmikasūtra*) correspond to the four Hīnayānic stages. The higher knowledge and attainments, which the Bodhisattvas claim and which, according to the Mahāyānists, are beyond the capacity of the Hīnayānists, are to be attained in the last four bhūmis.

## II. VIMALĀ OR ADHISĪLA

A Bodhisattva who has well practised the first bhūmi and seeks the second develops ten cittāśayas, viz., rju (plain), mṛdu (soft), karmaṇya (pliable), dama (submissive), śama (tranquil), kalyāṇa (beneficial), asaṃsrṣṭa (unclogged), anapekṣa (indifferent), udāra (noble) and māhātmya (magnanimous).<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Three samaṇakaraṇīyas in the *Aṅguttara*, I, p. 229.

<sup>2</sup> *B. Bh.*, p. 12 tells us that the Adhisīla-V. is the same as Vimalā-bhūmi of the *Daśa*.

<sup>3</sup> See *ante*, pp. 243 ff.

<sup>4</sup> *B. Bh.*, p. 11 mentions ten samyagāśayas but does not enumerate them. The *Mtu.*, I, pp. 85–9 mentions twenty adhyāśayas and amplifies each of them by a stanza. This is followed by an enumeration of the evil consequences that follow their non-observance, making the Bodhisattva go downwards. It is in connection with the third bhūmi (*Mtu.*, I, p. 101) that the *Mtu.* tells us daśa karmapathān kuśalān sevanti puruṣottamā.



When these āśayas are developed he is established in the second bhūmi, Vimalā. He then quite naturally refrains from prāṇātipāta (taking life), adattādāna (stealing), kāmamithyācāra (misconduct), anṛtavacana (telling lies), piśunavacana (malignant speech), paruṣavacana (harsh speech), sambhinna-pralāpa (frivolous talks) and becomes anabhidyā (non-avaricious), avyāpannacitta (devoid of malevolence), and comes to possess samyagdr̥ṣṭi (right view).<sup>1</sup> He then thinks that all beings suffer on account of not avoiding the said ten akuśalakarmapathas. He therefore must persuade them to follow the right conduct, and with that object in view, he must himself first observe them.<sup>2</sup>

He ponders over the fact that persons are graded according to their kuśalakarmapathas (good deeds performed) and other practices, by virtue of which they become men, gods, etc., and also Śrāvakas, Pratyekabuddhas, Bodhisattvas and Buddhas. He also ponders over the fact that by committing evil deeds (akuśalakarmapathas) beings are born in hell, the animal world or the Yama world, or as human beings with a short life and many diseases. So he decides that he will observe the ten kuśalakarmapathas and persuade others to do so.<sup>3</sup> He therefore becomes loving and compassionate towards all beings and takes upon himself the duty of being a teacher and a guide, bringing them from the wrong to the right view. He observes that beings suffer on account of anger, avarice, desire, hatred, delusion, mental darkness, lack of energy and so forth, that they are tossed up and

<sup>1</sup> *Daśa.*, pp. 23-5; on p. 26 the sufferings that follow each of the misdeeds are mentioned.

<sup>2</sup> *B. Bh.*, pp. 11-12 refers briefly to the acquisition of kuśalakarmapathas and remarks that just as gold is purified by heating and other processes, so a Bodhisattva is purified by the practice of these karmapathas. The *Mtu.*, however, makes no reference to the kuśalakarmapathas in the second bhūmi. *M. Ava.* (ch. II) enumerates the kuśalakarmapathas in all their details, and also dilates on the purity acquired by the bodhisattva in this bhūmi, which is for this reason named Vimalā.

<sup>3</sup> *Sāta.*, p. 1455 refers to śīlas, but its account agrees to a great extent with that of *Daśa.* *Sāta.* enumerates eight duties, śīlapariśuddhi, kṛtajñatā, etc. For comments on them, see *Sāta.*, pp. 1460-1. The *Mtu.* gives us very little information in regard to this bhūmi.



down by the waves of desire, love of existence, ignorance, that they are tied up by love and hatred, likes and dislikes, and labour under the misconception of 'I-ness' and 'Mine-ness', etc. Out of compassion he resolves to rescue those beings and lead them to a suitable haven of peace.

While in this bhūmi he can see many Buddhas, worship them and transfer the merit thus acquired to the attainment of Bodhi. He receives the kuśalakarmapathas from these Buddhas and fulfils them in many kalpas. He gets rid of mātsarya (covetousness) and carries out fully the precept of liberality. Of the four saṃgrahavastus, he increases priya-vadya (affability) in a great measure, and of the ten pāramitās he improves the śīlapāramitā in a great degree but not so the other pāramitās.

Should a bodhisattva after the attainment of the second bhūmi desire material prosperity, he can become a righteous cakravartin with seven ratnas and so forth.<sup>1</sup>

This account of the second bhūmi leaves us little doubt as to its similarity to the Adhiśīla practices of the Hīnayānists, without, of course, taking into account the adhyāśayas developed by the Bodhisattvas. In the *Visuddhimagga* it is stated that the sīla practices lead to the purification of all impurities relating to conduct,<sup>2</sup> and serve as the basis for the attainment of sotāpanna and sakadāgāmi stages. In the first chapter of the *Visuddhimagga*, Buddhaghosa dilates on the various sīlas to be observed by the householders, lay-devotees, monks and nuns, supplementing it by the second chapter on the thirteen dhutaṅgas, which he considers necessary for the ascetics (yogī) to bring their sīlas to perfection.<sup>3</sup> The *Nikāyas* usually mean by the sīlas the commonly known ten sīlas and the 250 pātimokkha rules.<sup>4</sup> By the complete performance of sīlas and a little of samādhi and paññā,<sup>5</sup> an

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *B. Bh.*, p. 12. The *Mtu.* adds in every bhūmi the qualities which make a bodhisattva retrogress from a higher to a lower bhūmi but passes over the other details.

<sup>2</sup> *Vis. M.*: sīlena ca duccarita-saṅkilesavisodhanam pakāsitam hoti.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 59.

<sup>4</sup> See, e.g., *Aṅguttara*, I, pp. 229, 235.

<sup>5</sup> It will be observed that an adept commences practising all the three, sīla, samādhi, and paññā, but he fulfils only one in one stage.



adept becomes a sotāpanna and a sakadāgāmi. We know that a sotāpanna is free from the three saṃyojanas and the two anusayas, viz., diṭṭhi and vicikicchā.<sup>1</sup> By bringing the three hindrances, rāga (attachment), dosa<sup>2</sup> (hatred), and moha (delusion) to their minimum (tanutta), and by getting rid of anusayas, kāmarāga and paṭigha and by practising a little more of samādhi, and paññā, he becomes a sakadāgāmi. In the *Paṭisambhidāmagga*,<sup>3</sup> it is stated that an adept in sotāpattiphala, sakadāgāmimagga, etc., obtains aññindriya (the faculty of perfect knowledge), and the dhammas that were already existing in him become unmanifest (avyākata), and the new thoughts that arise in his mind are pure, transcendental and conducive to Nibbāna.<sup>4</sup> A sotāpanna also gets rid of diṭṭhāsava completely and the other three āsavas so far as they lead to hell, while a sakadāgāmi of olārika (gross) kāmāsava, and partially of bhavāsava and aviġjāsava.<sup>5</sup> In addition to the attainments required in the sotāpattimagga, the adept must also think of the transitoriness and essencelessness of the five upādāna khandhas.<sup>6</sup>

There are two sub-stages between sotāpatti (or sattakkhattuparama) and sakadāgāmi. They are called kolaṃkola (kulaṅkula) and ekabījī (ekavīcika).<sup>7</sup> Any one who has got rid of the three saṃyojanas, completed the sīlas and practised a little (mattaso) of samādhi and paññā is usually called sotāpanna. He is also called sattakkhattuparama<sup>8</sup> because he will be re-born seven times more among men and the gods before he can attain Nibbāna. He will never fall back into hell and is destined to attain Nibbāna after getting rid of

<sup>1</sup> *Paṭis. M.*, II, p. 96.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, I, pp. 72-3; II, p. 96.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, II, p. 96.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, I, p. 116.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, I, p. 24.

<sup>6</sup> *Samyutta*, III, p. 168.

<sup>7</sup> *Aṅguttara*, I, p. 233; IV, pp. 380-1; *Samyutta*, V, p. 205; *Pug. P.*, p. 16; *Netti.*, p. 189; *Vis. M.*, p. 709; *Paṭis. M.*, I, p. 161; *Kośa*, VI, 34. For the two stages prior to sotāpanna, viz., Dhammānusārī and Saddhānusārī, see *ante*, pp. 250 ff.

<sup>8</sup> There are disagreements among the schools as to the number of existences; some interpret seven existences among men and seven among the gods, and some even more, though the texts cited by each clearly show that seven existences in all were meant. See, for details, *Kośa*, VI, 34, pp. 200-2.



two more avarabhāgiya (orambhāgiya=lower) fetters, viz., kāmaccanda and vyāpāda, and five ūrdhvabhāgiya (uddhambhāgiya=higher) saṃyojanas (fetters), viz., rūparāga, arūparāga, uddhatya, māna and moha.

A srotāpanna becomes a kulaṅkula by getting rid of the third and fourth categories of passions of the Kāmadhātu and by the acquisition of purer indriyas as opposed to the passions. He will be reborn twice or thrice either among the gods when he is called Devakulaṅkula or among men when he is called Maṇuṣyakulaṅkula.<sup>1</sup> The *Nikāyas* did not draw any clear difference between sotāpanna and kolaṅkula. The *Visuddhimagga* distinguishes them by saying that the Kolaṅkolas have vipassanā and indriyas of the medium order,<sup>2</sup> while the sotāpannas have those of mild (mṛdu) order.

The next stage Ekabījī (Ekavīcika) is put in the Pāli texts after Kolaṅkula and before Sakadāgāmi, but in the *Kośa* it is put after Sakadāgāmi.<sup>3</sup> The superiority of Ekabījī as shown in the Pāli texts is that they develop samādhi and paññā still more but cannot complete them.<sup>4</sup> The *Visuddhimagga* adds that they have sharp faculties (tikkhindriya). In consequence of this, they are reborn once more among men (māṇusakam bhavam) for attaining Nibbāna. Quite similar is the description of a Sakadāgāmi; only in this case, it is not mentioned whether the one more rebirth will be among the gods or among men; the texts simply say “imaṃ lokam āgantvā”, i.e., they will be reborn in the Kāmadhātu, which includes both men and the gods. In any case, the Sakadāgāmis reduce rāga, dosa, and moha to their minimum (tan-utta).

The *Kośa* tells us that a Sakadāgāmi destroys passions (kleśas) up to the sixth category. Having been born among the gods, he will be reborn once more among men. In him rāga, dveṣa, and moha are brought to the minimum, and there remain only the three lower categories of passion, viz., mṛdvadhimātra, mṛdumadhya and mṛdumṛdu. The

<sup>1</sup> *Kośa*, II, 34.

<sup>2</sup> *Vis. M.*, p. 709 following *Kośa*.

<sup>3</sup> *Kośa*, VI. 35, 36.

<sup>4</sup> ‘Na paripūrakārī’ is used instead of ‘mattasokārī’.



Ekavīcikas are distinguished from them by the fact that they destroy seven or eight categories of passions and acquire the faculties opposed to these passions.<sup>1</sup>

The divisions of srotāpannas into three classes are mentioned also in the *Laṅkāvatāra*. It says that the srotāpannas are of ordinary (hīna), medium (madhya), and excellent (viśiṣṭa) classes<sup>2</sup>. The hīna class will undergo seven more rebirths, the madhya (*i.e.* kuḷāṅkula) three or five and the viśiṣṭa (*i.e.* ekavīcika<sup>3</sup>) only one. The saṃyojanas, *viz.*, satkāyadrṣṭi, vicikitsā and śīlavrataparāmarśa are mild, medium or sharp according to the class of srotāpannas. A srotāpanna by getting rid of the three saṃyojanas does not have rāga, dveṣa and moha.<sup>4</sup> While speaking of the sakṛdāgāmi, the *Laṅkāvatāra* simply mentions that they require one more birth to put an end to duḥkha.<sup>5</sup> The stage next to sakṛdāgāmi is anāgāmi corresponding to the third bhūmi of the Mahāyānists.

### III. PRABHĀKARĪ OR ADHICITTAVIHĀRA

A Bodhisattva who has completed the second bhūmi and seeks the third should develop the following ten cittāśayas:<sup>6</sup> śuddha (pure), sthira (firm), nirvid (disgustful), avirāga (non-detached), avinivṛta (non-returning), drḍha (strong), uttapta (energetic), atrpta (never satisfied), udāra (noble) and māhātmya (magnanimous).

While in the third bhūmi the bodhisattva realises that the constituted things are impermanent, full of sufferings,

<sup>1</sup> *Kośa*, VI. 36 says on the etymology of the word thus: vīci = interval, separation, *i.e.*, they are separated from Nirvāṇa by one more birth. Quite different, however, is the etymology given in the Pāli texts, where bīja = seed.

<sup>2</sup> *Laṅkā.*, p. 117.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 117-9 explains Satkāyadrṣṭi as of two kinds, sahaja (natural) and parikalpita (imaginary), and then interprets Vicikitsā and Śīlavrataparāmarśa as a Yogācāra text would do.

<sup>4</sup> *Laṅkā.*, p. 119; on this point *Laṅkā.* differs from all Hīnayāna texts, which say that Sakṛdāgāmis bring rāga, dveṣa and moha to the minimum.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 120.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. *B. Bh.*, p. 12; *Mtu.*, I, pp. 89-90 mentions 28 qualities which send back a Bodhisattva from the 3rd to the 2nd bhūmi.



have momentary origin and decay, are without beginning and end, and are subject to the causal law. He understands the misery and despair as issuing from attachment to saṃskāras, and so he applies his mind to the attainment of Tathāgatajñāna,<sup>1</sup> which he finds as unthinkable, immeasurable and above all misery and despair, and where there is neither fear nor trouble, and by attaining which one can save beings. He then develops ten more cittāśayas.

Realising this state of things, the bodhisattva again resolves to rescue beings and strive for them. He then thinks over the means by which he can rescue them and finds that it is possible only by anāvaraṇavimokṣajñāna (the unscreened knowledge of emancipation). He observes that it is attainable only by hearing and practising the dharma. So he turns his mind to perfecting himself in the dharma and resolves to sacrifice all earthly wealth and enjoyment, and undergo all sorts of suffering.<sup>2</sup> He now sees that mere purification in speech and action would not be sufficient and that he must observe the dharmas and anudharmas.<sup>3</sup> With that end in view, he practises the dhyānas, the four brahmavihāras, viz., maitrī, karuṇā, muditā, and upekṣā, and acquires the abhiññās, viz., ṛddhividha (power of performing miracles), divyaśrota (supernatural power of hearing), paracittañāna (power of reading the thoughts of others), pūrvanivāsānusmaraṇa (power of remembering former births), and divyacakṣu (supernatural power of vision<sup>4</sup>).

He sees many Buddhas, hears their discourses, and follows their directions. He comprehends that all dharmas are non-transmigrating, non-decaying and are only subject to cause and condition. The fetters of Kāma, Rūpa, Bhava

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *B. Bh.*, pp. 12-3.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Mtu.*, I, pp. 91-5 for ekā gāthā subhāṣitā a Bodhisattva is prepared to sacrifice everything, even his own life. This is followed by an enumeration of the evils for which a Bodhisattva may retrogress.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *B. Bh.*, p. 13; *Mtu.*, I, pp. 91-2; *M. Ava.* (*Le Muséon*, VIII, pp. 301 ff.)

<sup>4</sup> *Sata.*, p. 1455 mentions only five dharmas in connection with the third bhūmi. Except the first there is very little agreement among the three works *Mtu.*, *Sata.*, and *Daśa.*



and Avidyā become weak, those due to wrong views (micchādiṭṭhi) having been already destroyed. He gets rid of rāga, dveṣa and moha, and the following āśayas are purified: kṣāntisauratya (forbearance with gentleness), akhilya-mādhurya (sweetness without hindrance), akopya (non-anger), akṣubhita (non-agitation), alubhita (non-covetousness) anunnāmāvanāma (non-elation and non-depression), sarvakṛtapratikṛtānām niṣkāṅkṣā (non-desire for remuneration for works done), aśāṭhyamāyāvitā (non-deceit) and agahanatā (non-mysteriousness). Of the four saṃgrahavastus, he increases arthacaryā in a great measure, and of the ten pāramitās he improves kṣāntipāramitā, but not the rest.

In this description of the third bhūmi it will be noticed that the bodhisattvas apart from the extraordinary qualities peculiar to them commence practising the eight dhyānas (jhānas), the four brahmavihāras, and the six abhiññās. Their fetters relating to Kāma, Rūpa, Bhava, and Avidyā become weak, and those due to dṛṣṭi are destroyed. Their rāga, dveṣa, and moha are completely destroyed.

In the Hīnayāna system also, an adept after completing the sīlas attempts to rise higher and higher in the training of mind through samādhi.<sup>1</sup> The *Visuddhimagga*<sup>2</sup> treats in detail the practices that are classed under samādhi. They are the four jhānas with the help of forty kammaṭṭhānas (bases of meditation), ten anussatis (objects of remembrance), four brahmavihāras, the four āruppa (higher) jhānas, two bhāvanās, ten iddhis, and six abhiññās, all of which, it will be observed, are included in the third bhūmi. The *Visuddhimagga* also tells us that an adept after completing the citta practices becomes an Anāgāmi, i.e., he will not be reborn any more in the Kāmadhātu.<sup>3</sup> He gets rid of the five orambhāgiyas (lower), viz., sakkāyadiṭṭhi, vicikicchā, sīlabbataparāmāsa, kāmaccanda and vyāpāda,<sup>4</sup> completely destroys rāga, dosa and moha, and removes wholly

<sup>1</sup> *Vis. M.*, p. 84.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, ch. II.

<sup>3</sup> *Pug. P. Cy.*, p. 198; oram vuccati kāmadhātu.

<sup>4</sup> The first three are destroyed by the Sotāpattis and Sakadāgāmis; so in this stage only the last two are destroyed. See *ante*, pp. 264, 265.



kāmāsava, and partially bhavāsava and avijjāsava.<sup>1</sup> He comes into existence as an upapātika (self-born<sup>2</sup>) and attains Nibbāna.

The Anāgāmis are divided into five sub-classes<sup>3</sup> called :

(1) Antarāparinibbāyi, *i.e.*, those who practise the path to destroy the five higher (uddhambhāgiya) saṃyojanas just after coming into being and before reaching the middle of their lives.<sup>4</sup>

(2) Upahacca (=Upapadya of *Kośa*)-parinibbāyi, *i.e.*, those who practise the path to destroy the five higher saṃyojanas after the middle and a little before the end of their lives.<sup>5</sup>

(3) Asaṅkhāraparinibbāyi, *i.e.*, those who attain parinibbāna by putting an end to kilesas with a little trouble and without great effort (appadukkhena adhimattam payogam akatvā).<sup>6</sup> The *Kośa* explains it as those who attain Nirvāṇa without effort because they are not energetic.<sup>7</sup> The *Aṅguttara Nikāya* gives us a different interpretation. It says that those who complete the fourth Jhāna, develop the five balas and five indriyas, and attain parinibbāna in this life are called Asaṅkhāraparinibbāyi.<sup>8</sup>

(4) Sasaṅkhāraparinibbāyi, *i.e.*, those who attain parinibbāna by putting an end to kilesas with great trouble and great effort (dukkhena kasirena adhimattam payogam katvā).<sup>9</sup> The *Kośa* explains it as those who attain Nirvāṇa without relaxing the exercises because they are energetic. The *Aṅguttara Nikāya* explains it as those who look upon the body as evil (asubha), food as loathsome and all constituted things

<sup>1</sup> *Paṭis. M.*, p. 118.

<sup>2</sup> In the *Suddhāvāsāloka* (*Pug. P. Cy.*, p. 198).

<sup>3</sup> *Vis. M.*, p. 710. The *Kośa* adds five more to this list. See fn. *infra*. *Pug. P. Cy.*, p. 200 calculates 48 classes of Anāgāmis out of these five.

<sup>4</sup> *Pug. P.*, p. 16. *Kośa*, VI. 37 explains it differently.

<sup>5</sup> *Pug. P. Cy.*, p. 199 : āyukkhayassa āsanne thatvā. It may be remarked in this connection that the length of lives in those existences is counted by thousands of kalpas. *Kośa*, VI, p. 211 explains it as those who attain sopādiṣeṣanirvāṇa-dhātu immediately after birth.

<sup>6</sup> *Pug. P. Cy.*, p. 199.

<sup>7</sup> *Kośa*, VI, p. 211.

<sup>8</sup> *Aṅguttara*, II, p. 156.

<sup>9</sup> *Pug. P. Cy.*, p. 199; see *Vis. M.*, p. 453 sasaṅkhāra-pubbapayoga.



as disgusting. They cogitate on the transitoriness of things and death, and make their minds steady. They develop greatly the five balas and five indriyas.<sup>1</sup>

(5) Uddhamsoṭa Akaniṭṭhagāmi, i.e., those Anāgāmis who do not attain parinibbāna while they are in the Aviha heaven but rise higher and higher until they reach the Akaniṭṭha heaven where they attain Nibbāna.<sup>2</sup>

Thus we see that the Hīnayānic Anāgāmi stage is parallel to the Mahāyānic third bhūmi.

The practices of the fourth, fifth and sixth bhūmis correspond to the Adhipaññā practices of the Hīnayānists. In the *Bodhisattvabhūmi*, three bhūmis are put under Adhiprajñā-vihāra, the reason being that the Bodhisattva acquires Prajñā by three different means (tribhir mukhaiḥ), viz., bodhipakṣika dharmas, the four truths, and the causal law. So it subdivides this Vihāra into three :

(i) Bodhipakṣyapratisaṃyuktādhiprajñāvihāra (practice of Prajñā with reference to the Bodhipakṣika dharmas);

(ii) Satyapratisaṃyuktādhiprajñāvihāra (practice of Prajñā with reference to the Truths); and

(iii) Pratityasamutpādapratisaṃyuktādhiprajñāvihāra (practice of Prajñā with reference to the law of causation).

<sup>1</sup> *Aṅguttara*, II, p. 156. Cf. *Kośa*, VI, p. 212 fn. The Anāgāmis (1) and (4) are of sharp faculties, (2) and (3) of mild faculties. (3) and (4) practise the dhyānas while (1) and (2) are described without any mention of dhyānas. About the precedence of (3) to (4), see *Kośa*, VI, p. 212.

<sup>2</sup> See *Kośa*, VI. 37, p. 213 for two kinds of Ūrdhvasrotas : (i) Akaniṭṭhagā and (ii) Naivasamjñānāsamjñāyatanagā.

The Akaniṭṭhagā are divided again into three sub-classes:

(a) Pluta (one who soars high); on account of dhyānas practised by him, he is born in the Brahmakāyika heaven and lastly he is born in the Akaniṭṭha heaven where he attains Nirvāṇa;

(b) Ardhapluta (one who soars only half-way); on account of dhyānas practised by him, he is born in the Brahmakāyika heaven, from which he passes to Suddhāvāsa and thence to Akaniṭṭha to attain Nirvāṇa there; and

(c) Sarvacyuta; before entering into Akaniṭṭha heaven, he passes across all the heavens except Mahābrahma. An Anāgāmi cannot have two existences in one heaven because he always rises higher and higher.



IV. ARCISMATĪ OR BODHIPAKṢYAPRATISAMYUKTĀ-  
DHIPRAJÑĀVIHĀRA

A Bodhisattva passes from the third to the fourth bhūmi after acquiring the ten dharmālokas<sup>1</sup>, i.e., after obtaining insight into sattvadhātu (world of sentient beings), lokadhātu (various worlds), dharmadhātu (universe), ākāśadhātu (space), vijñānadhātu (world of consciousness), kāmadhātu (world of desires), rūpadhātu (world of forms), ārūpyadhātu (world of formlessness), udārādhyāśayādhimuktidhātu (spheres of noble intention and aspiration) and mātṛādhimuktidhātu (spheres of magnanimous intention and aspiration).

He becomes an accomplished member of the Tathāgata family by acquiring the following ripeners of knowledge,—unbending aspiration, implicit faith in the three ratnas, clear perception of the origin and decay of saṃskāras, of the non-origination of things in reality, of the incoming and outgoing of the world, of saṃsāra (worldly existences) and nirvāṇa (cessation), and of the actions of beings of the various spheres.

He practises the four smṛtyupasthānas (earnest thoughts) and exerts to acquire further merits and preserve the merits already acquired and not to commit evil actions any more. He practises the ṛddhipādas, the five indriyas<sup>2</sup> and balas, the seven bojjhaṅgas and the eight mārgas.<sup>3</sup>

In this bhūmi he gets rid of satkāyadr̥ṣṭi and its relevant factors and performs actions leading only to sambodhi.

As he acquires the various qualities of this bhūmi, his mind becomes softer, aspiration stronger, compassion for the sentient beings greater, and consequently he becomes more and more energetic.<sup>4</sup> His doubts are removed and his cittāśaya becomes immeasurable.

He now takes ordination.<sup>5</sup> His kuśalamūlas become of the purest kind. Of the four saṃgrahavastus he develops samānārthatā (feeling of equality) and practises the vīrya-pāramitā of the ten pāramitās.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *B. Bh.*, pp. 14–5.

<sup>2</sup> Viz., Śraddhā, Vīrya, Smṛti, Samādhi and Prajñā.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *B. Bh.*, p. 15.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *B. Bh.*, pp. 15, 16.

<sup>5</sup> See *ante*, 1st bhūmi, p. 259.



V. SUDURJAYĀ OR SATYAPRATISAMYUKTĀ-  
DHIPRAJÑĀVIHĀRA

A Bodhisattva passes from the fourth to the fifth bhūmi by developing the cittāśayaviśuddhisamatā<sup>1</sup> (uniformity and purity of intention) relating to the following ten matters: doctrines of the past, present and future Buddhas, moral precepts, mental discipline, removal of wrong views and doubts, knowledge of the right and wrong path, practice of the Bodhipakṣika dharmas, and the duty of elevating beings morally.

In this bhūmi, on account of the repeated practice of the various Bodhipakṣika dharmas, the possession of a still more purified intention,<sup>2</sup> the comprehension of tathātva (thatness) of all dharmas, and the further increase of his aspiration, compassion, love, etc., he understands the four Āryasatyas.<sup>3</sup> He becomes proficient in understanding the

(a) Conventional truth (saṃvṛti) on account of catering to the wishes of other beings;

(b) Transcendental truth (paramārtha) on account of following only one path;

(c) Truth of signs (lakṣaṇa) by realising the generic and particular characteristics of things (svasāmānyalakṣaṇa);

(d) Truth of analysis (vibhāga) by knowing the various divisions of dharmas;

(e) Truth of overcoming (nistīraṇa) on account of knowing the real condition of skandhas, dhātus, āyatanas, etc ;

<sup>1</sup> The fourth bhūmi in the *Mtu.* is not very clearly described. It mentions some evils which retard the progress of a Bodhisattva and speaks about the avaiivartika qualities attained or to be attained. See *Sata.*, pp. 1455, 1462-3, which gives a slightly different list.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *B. Bh.*, p. 16. The *Mtu.* (p. 110) says that the citta of a bodhisattva when passing from the fourth to the fifth bhūmi realises “ādīptam sarvabhavaṃ rāga-dveṣa-moha-bhayaṃ”. But this is mentioned in the *Daśa.* in connection with the 3rd. bhūmi (see *ante*, p. 267). The account of the *Sata.* is also different and speaks only of some disciplinary rules. It says that in this bhūmi a bodhisattva avoids gr̥hisam̐stava, bhikṣuṇī-sam̐stava, kulamātsarya, saṃgaṇikāsthāna, ātmoṭkarṣaṇa, vyāpāda, parapaṃsana, daśākuśalakarmapathā, māna, stambha, viparyāsa, rāga, dveṣa and moha. (*Sata.*, pp. 1456, 1463-5).

<sup>3</sup> *B. Bh.*, p. 16.



(f) Truth of things (vastu) by subjecting his body and mind to afflictions ;

(g) Truth of origin (prabhava) on account of births ;

(h) Truth of decay and non-origin (kṣayānutpāda) on account of the complete suppression of all sufferings ;

(i) Truth of the knowledge of the path (mārgajñānāvātāra) ; and

(j) Truth of the origin of Tathāgata knowledge (tathāgatajñānasamudaya) on account of attaining knowledge in all its details and for following the bodhisattvabhūmis.

Having known the truths he realises that all the constituted things are essenceless, false. He pities the ignorant beings who undergo repeated births and the consequent sufferings for not knowing the truth and wishes that all his merits be transferred to them for their happiness, training, and ultimate emancipation.

In this bhūmi he becomes smṛtimān, i.e., does not get bewildered, matimān for having clear knowledge, gatimān for knowing the sense in which a sūtra is uttered, hrīmān for preserving himself as well as others, dhṛtimān for practising the disciplinary rules, and buddhimān for being proficient in ascertaining what is proper and improper and such other things.<sup>1</sup> His desire and energy for acquiring further merits and rendering service to beings become greater and greater. He pleases the beings by means of all the four saṃgrahavastus, by showing his rūpakāya, by giving discourses on the doctrines, on the Bodhisattva practices, on the greatness of Tathāgatas, on the evils of the world, on the virtue of acquiring Buddhañāna, and by performing miracles. For establishing the Buddha dharma he also acquires the secular sciences, viz., mathematics, medicine, poetry, drama, metallurgy, astronomy, etc.<sup>2</sup>

He sees the Buddhas, and hears the dharma from them. He renounces the world, becomes a dharmabhāṇaka. Of the ten pāramitās, he likes dhyānapāramitā.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *B Bh.*, p. 17.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*



VI. ABHIMUKHĪ OR PRATĪTYASAMUTPĀDAPRATISAṂYUKTĀ-  
DHIPRAJÑĀVIHĀRA

A Bodhisattva, on the completion of the mārḡas, passes to the sixth bhūmi and realises the ten kinds of sameness,<sup>1</sup> viz., the sameness of all dharmas on account of their being (i) animitta (baseless), (ii) alakṣaṇa (signless), (iii) anutpāda (originless), (iv) ajāta (unborn), (v) vivikta (detached), (vi) ādiviśuddha (pure in the very beginning), (vii) niṣprapañca (inexpressible), (viii) anāyūha-niryūha (non-taken and non-rejected), (ix) māyāsvapnapratibhāsapratīśrutkopama (similar to dream, illusion, or echo), and (x) bhāvābhāvādvaya (identity of existence and non-existence).

Looking upon all things in this manner, the bodhisattva through his deep faith reaches the sixth bhūmi but does not yet attain the anutpattikadharmakṣānti (faith in the non-origination of things by nature). As mahākaruṇā predominates in his mind, he pities the beings who, on account of their ignorance, think of the things of the world as originating, decaying and possessing a soul (ātman). Not knowing the truth, they walk along the wrong path, are moved by merits and demerits, and thus have some abhisamṣkāras (thought-constructions). The thought-seed (citta-bīja) thus produced by the abhisamṣkāras becomes contaminated (sāsrava), being full of upādāna (attachment to existence) and productive of birth, old age, death and rebirth. Then by the thought-creation of karma-kṣetra (fields of action), ignorance and desire, a net of views is woven, from which come name and form (nāma-rūpa); from them arise in succession the five organs of sense, contact, feeling (vedanā), abhinandana (enjoyment) combined with tṛṣṇā (desire), attachment (upādāna), desire for existence (bhava), and five skandhas distributed into five classes of beings (gatipañcaka). These beings fade into old age, despair, etc. The bodhisattva comprehends that there is really no doer of these, which, being by nature uncreated by any power (anābhoga, śāntilakṣaṇa), dis-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *B. Bh.*, p. 18. The *Mtu.* (I, p. 120) does not speak of anything particular in this bhūmi. It simply says that a bodhisattva by associating with the meditating ascetics (yogācāras) and by developing śamatha and vipaśyanā passes from the 5th to the 6th bhūmi.



appear and there is no destroyer of them. The bodhisattva further realises that the non-comprehension of the highest Truth is avidyā (ignorance) and avidyā is the source of saṃskāras, which produce the first citta-vijñāna with its concomitant (sahaḥ) the four upādāna-skandhas, from which arise name and form and gradually the mass of sufferings. The tree of suffering grows without any doer, or feeler (kāraṇavedakarahita). So he realises that these three worlds are all mere thought-constructions (cittamātram yad idam traidhātukam).<sup>1</sup>

Through his comprehension of the law of causation from the ten different standpoints and on account of his being convinced of the fact that there is no doer or feeler, and no creator (asvāmika), and that all things are subject to cause and condition, and devoid of any essence, detached from everything else, and essentially non-existing, the bodhisattva realises the śūnyatā-vimokṣamukha (release of essencelessness).<sup>2</sup> Then by comprehending that the bhavāṅgas (the links in the chain of causation) are by nature extinct (svabhāva-nirodha), he does not notice any dharmanimitta (basis of dharmas) and thus he attains animitta-vimokṣamukha (release of baselessness). Lastly, on account of his understanding the śūnyatā and animittatā of all bhavāṅgas, he does not really seek any vimokṣa, though he keeps up the appearance of doing so out of compassion for the innumerable beings; hence he obtains apraṇihita-vimokṣamukha (release of desirelessness). Keeping mahākaruṇā before him, he completes the bodhyaṅgas which are still incomplete, and being convinced of the fact that the saṃskāras proceed from the assemblage of, or connection with, materials that are by nature non-originating and non-decaying, he turns his mind to asaṅga-jñāna (knowledge free from attachment) called Prajñāpāramitāvihāra<sup>3</sup> and develops it greatly. He now practises all the śūnyatā, animitta and apraṇihita samādhis and develops ten āśayas for rising higher and higher in the spiritual attainments and goes beyond every possible chance of fall to Śrāvaka or Pratyeka-

<sup>1</sup> The Pratītyasamutpāda is explained here from ten different standpoints, see *Daśa.*, pp. 48-51. See *ante*, pp. 210-1.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *B. Bh.*, p. 18.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *B. Bh.*, p. 19.



buddha stages. Of the ten pāramitās he greatly develops the praññāpāramitā.<sup>1</sup>

A bodhisattva by passing through these bhūmis attains all the qualities of an arhat besides those which are indispensable to a bodhisattva. He is now an arhat because, as the *Lankāvatāra* says, he is now free from the thought-constructions (vikalpa) of dhyāna (meditation), dheya (objects of meditation), samādhi (concentration), vimokṣa (release), bala (powers) abhiññā (higher knowledge), kleśa (afflictions) and duḥkha (misery).<sup>2</sup>

We have seen that, according to the Hīnayānists, an adept on completion of the paññā practices becomes an arhat. Buddhaghosa devotes the last twenty chapters of the *Visuddhimagga* to the elucidation of the various matters which comprise the Paññābhūmi. In this bhūmi<sup>3</sup> the adept is expected to examine analytically the five skandhas (constituents of the body), the twelve āyatana (fields of the organs of sense), twenty kinds of indriyas (faculties), four truths, and the twelve-linked chain of causation. These are only the preliminary practices of the Paññābhūmi. These help the adepts to complete the bhāvanāmārga. We have seen<sup>4</sup> that the bhāvanāmārga commences in the sixteenth moment, i.e., the last moment of the darśana-mārga when the adept becomes srotāpanna. So the adepts while progressing along the stages of sanctification complete the sila- and citta-visuddhis and partially the visuddhi relating to paññā. These visuddhis, as classified in the *Visuddhimagga*<sup>5</sup> and the *Abhidhammatthasaṅgaha*<sup>6</sup> are “(i) diṭṭhivisuddhi (purity of views), kaṅkhāvitaraṇa-visuddhi (purity by which all the sixteen classes of doubts with reference to the past, present and future are transcended); maggāmaggañānadassanavisuddhi (purity consisting in the dis-

<sup>1</sup> *Sata.*, p. 1456 says that a Bodhisattva in this bhūmi completes the six pāramitās and avoids the following six thoughts: śrāvakacittam, pratyekabuddhacittam, paritarṣanacittam, anabalīnacittam, durmanas-kacittam and vikṣepacittam.

<sup>2</sup> *Lankā.*, p. 120.

<sup>3</sup> *Vis. M.*, p. 443.

<sup>4</sup> See *ante*, pp. 253 ff.

<sup>5</sup> *Vis. M.*, pp. 443, 587ff.

<sup>6</sup> Mrs. Rhys Davids has lucidly explained these visuddhis in her *Intro. to the Compendium*; her English rendering has been adopted here; for further details, see *Comp. of Phil.*, pp. 65ff.



tinguishing of the actual path from that which is not the path); paṭipadāñāṇadassanavisuddhi (purity of insight during the progress of the practice of discernment), and ñāṇadassana-visuddhi<sup>1</sup> (purity-insight or path-insight).<sup>2</sup> In the arhat stage, the adept gets rid of the five remaining saṃyojanas (uddhambhāgiyas), all kilesas (afflictions), āsavas (impurities) and comprehends finally the real sense of the four truths, *i.e.*, he obtains perfect knowledge and his mind is completely freed. He will have no more rebirth and will attain Nibbāna. This is also borne out by the description of the arhats that we find in the *Prajñāpāramitās* and other Mahāyāna texts. It generally runs thus: An arhat is kṣiṇāsrava (devoid of the four āsavas), niṣkleśa (free from afflictions), vaśībhūta (with a well-controlled self), suvimuktacitta (with the mind completely freed), suvimuktaprajñā (with knowledge cleared up), ājāneya (well-bred), kṛtakṛtya (doer of all that is to be done); apahr̥tabhāra (relieved of the burden of five skandhas), anuprāpta-svakārtha (successful in achieving the object of life) and parikṣiṇabhavasamyojana (free from the fetters of rebirth).

Corresponding to the two classes of sotāpannas called Saddhānusārī and Dhammānusārī, the arhats are also divided into two classes: Ubhatobhāgavimutta and Paññāvimutta.<sup>3</sup> The former comprises those who realise the eight vimokkhas (releases)<sup>4</sup> and destroys their āsavas (impurities) by paññā (knowledge) while the latter comprises those who do not realise the eight vimokkhas but destroy their āsavas by paññā.<sup>5</sup>

All the arhats, it seems, did not possess the paṭisambhiddās, which a bodhisattva acquires among others in the ninth

<sup>1</sup> *Vis. M.*, p. 672: sotāpattimaggo sakadāgāmmimaggo anāgāmmimaggo arahattamaggo ti imesu pana catusu maggesu ñāṇam ñāṇadassanavisuddhināma.

<sup>2</sup> Buddhaghosa calls these five visuddhis 'sarīra' while the sīla- and citta-visuddhis 'mūla.' See *Vis. M.*, p. 443.

<sup>3</sup> See *ante*, p. 251.

<sup>4</sup> *Dīgha*, II, pp. 70-1 (up to saññāvedayitanirodha).

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, II, p. 71; *Pug. P.*, p. 14; *Aṅguttara*, IV, p. 453; *Kośa*, VI. 63. The *Aṅguttara*, IV, pp. 452-3, however, says that the Paññāvimutta attains the eight vimokkhas, and omits the words "kāyena phassitvā" which are mentioned in connection with the Kāyasakkhins and Ubhatobhāgavimuttas.



bhūmi. It is often found that an arhat who possessed paṭi-sambhidā also was specially described as sahapāṭisambhidā arahattam pāpuṇi (i.e., attained arahathood with paṭisambhidā).<sup>1</sup>

With the sixth bhūmi, our comparison of the Hīnayānic and Mahāyānic stages ends. The accounts of the remaining four bhūmis have nothing to do with the Hīnayānic practices, and besides, the attainments for which a bodhisattva performs the tasks of these bhūmis were unknown to the Hīnayānists. From the seventh bhūmi really commence the attempts of the bodhisattva to realise the dharmasūnyatā, the nirnimittatā of things cognised by us, and the four bhūmis only indicate the gradual development of this knowledge of bodhisattvas until the Tathāgatabhūmi, in which he becomes a perfect Tathāgata and one with all the other Tathāgatas. The Hīnayānists, of course, accord a very high position to Buddha with the extraordinary powers and attributes, some of which are found mentioned in connection with the last four bhūmis.

#### VII. DŪRĀṄGAMĀ OR SĀBHISAMSKĀRA-SĀBHOCA-NIRNIMITTA-VIHĀRA

A Bodhisattva after completing the bodhisattvamārga enters into the seventh bhūmi. He now commences practising a different and superior path aided by the ten kinds of knowledge of expedients (upāyaprajñājñāna)<sup>2</sup>. The ten kinds are as follows: He

i. (a) possesses a mind well-trained by the meditations of sūnyatā, animitta and apraṇihita; (b) appears as if acquiring a collection of great merits and knowledge;

ii. (a) comprehends the essencelessness (nairātmya-niḥsattva)

<sup>1</sup> *Mil.*, p. 18; *DhP. A.*, II, pp. 58, 78, 93; *Aṅguttara*, II, p. 160: Sāriputta attained it within a fortnight after his ordination; *Mahāvamsa*, pp. 3-6: pabinnatthādiññāṇaṃ piṭakattayadhāraṇaṃ....arhantānaṃ; p. 54: chaḷabhiññe tepiṭake pabhinnapaṭisambhida, etc.

<sup>2</sup> *B. Bh.*, p. 19. It should be noted that there are two sections in each of the ten kinds of knowledge or activities of the bodhisattva, the first section being indicated as (a) representing his actual, and the second as (b) the expedients (upāyakauśalya) adopted by him for the sake of ordinary human beings.



of all dharmas; (b) does not give up the four apramāṇavihāras, viz., karuṇā, maitrī, muditā and upekṣā;

iii. (a) collects the best of all merits; (b) does not cling to any dharma;

iv. (a) remains detached from the three dhātus; (b) shows also his doings in the three dhātus;

v. (a) frees himself absolutely from all afflictions (kleśas); (b) performs actions needed for eradicating rāga, dveṣa etc. of beings;

vi. (a) realises the non-duality (advaya) of all things which are like mirage, echo, etc.; (b) shows also his various actions, discriminations, and immeasurable aspirations;

vii. develops a mind well aware of the sameness of all Buddhakṣetras;

viii. (a) merges himself in the dharmakāya of all Buddhas; (b) shows also his rūpa-kāya with its major and minor lakṣaṇas<sup>1</sup>;

ix. acquires the voice of the Tathāgata; and

x. (a) comprehends the time distinguished as past, present and future as one moment (ekakṣaṇatryadhvānubodham); (b) shows also for the sake of the world his existence in the various kalpas.

For even a moment he does not remain dissociated from mārga-abhinirhāra (activities relating to the path), and jñānābhirhāra (activities relating to jñāna). He completes all the ten pāramitās<sup>2</sup> and the four saṃgrahavastus, four adhiṣṭhānas and thirty-seven bodhipakṣika dharmas.<sup>3</sup> He is now endowed with kāyakarma and vākkarma, pure according to the aspiration of the bodhisattva, the ten kuśala-karmapathas practised by Samyaksambuddhas and performs spontaneously the functions connected with the worldly arts and crafts (śilpasthānakarmasthāna) which were mastered

<sup>1</sup> *Laṅkā.*, p. 192, tells us that the bodhisattvas in this bhūmi cannot see the manomayadharmakāya of the Tathāgata.

<sup>2</sup> *Daśa.*, pp. 56-7. It will be observed that the pāramitās are counted here as ten, i.e., adding to the usual six (7) Upāyakaṣāya, (8) Praṇidhāna, (9) Bala and (10) Jñāna. See *ante*, p. 12.

<sup>3</sup> *Daśa.*, pp. 57-8 gives briefly a comparative statement of the previous six bhūmis and the seventh bhūmi. All the attainments acquired hitherto up to the seventh bhūmi are completed spontaneously (anābhogena) by the bodhisattvas in the later bhūmis.



by him in the fifth bhūmi,<sup>1</sup> and is now the teacher of beings of the three thousand worlds<sup>2</sup> and has no equal in āśaya (aspiration) and exertion (prayoga) excepting, of course, those bodhisattvas who are in the higher bhūmis. He has now in front of his mind all dhyānas, samādhis, samāpattis, abhiññās and vimokṣas, which will be completed in the following bhūmis. He now practises many samādhis and goes beyond the Śrāvaka and Pratyekabuddha bhūmi and approaches the Prajñāñānavicāraṇabhūmi.<sup>3</sup>

He attained nirodha in the sixth bhūmi, and in the seventh, he entered into and arose out of it but it should not be thought that he is subject to nirodha because he is above the delusion (vitarkadoṣa) of the Śrāvakas, viz., that nirodha is saṃskṛtātyanta vyupaśama (the ultimate cessation of the constituted things).<sup>4</sup> It is one of the excellences of bodhisattvas that they rise up to, and remain in, the bhūtakoti-vihāra (i.e., ultimate possible state of sentient existence)<sup>5</sup> but are never subject to nirodha.

Armed with great powers, meditation, and knowledge of expedients, he manifests himself in the world, shows his aspiration for Nirvāṇa, and surrounds himself with a large number of followers, but he remains mentally detached from everything. According to his prañidhāna he appears in the tridhātu to rescue beings from misery, but he is not contaminated by the worldly impurities. Though he has the Buddhañāna he shows himself as belonging to the class of Śrāvakas or Pratyekabuddhas, or even as subject to the snares of Māra and the influences of heretical teachers, going even so far as to sever himself from the Buddhadharma, take to worldly rites, or the enjoyments of the worlds and heavens.

<sup>1</sup> See *ante*, p. 272.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *B. Bh.*, p. 20.

<sup>3</sup> *Daśa.*, p. 60 accounts for the reasons of Bodhisattva's repeating the performances of the first or other bhūmis. Cf. *B. Bh.*, p. 20.

<sup>4</sup> In fact this shows the line of demarcation between the Śrāvakas and the Bodhisattvas.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. *Bhavāgra* or *Bhavāgraparama*=*Nevasaññānāsaññāyatana*. *Kośa*, VI, 37 fn. Cf. also *Dīgha*, II, p. 156: When Buddha was attaining parinibbāna it was said that he "nevasaññānāsaññāyatana-samāpattiyā vutṭhahitvā saññā-vedayita-nirodham samāpajji." Then he comes down from there and attains parinibbāna in the fourth jhāna.



He sees many Buddhas, hears from them the law, and acts according to their directions. His faith in the abstruse dharma (*gambhīradharmakṣānti*) is purified. He greatly develops the *upāyakaṣālya-pāramitā*.<sup>1</sup>

#### VIII. ACALĀ OR ANĀBHOGA-NIRNIMITTA-VIHĀRA

A Bodhisattva after completing the seven bhūmis and purifying the mārga by means of knowledge and expedients, collecting merits, forming the great resolutions (*mahāpraṇidhānas*), establishing himself in the four adhiṣṭhānas (*viz.*, *satya*, *tyāga*, *upaśama* and *prajñā*), and so forth, he comprehends that all things are without origin, growth, sign, decay, change and are by nature non-existent, and that their beginning, middle and end are all the same; in short, he comprehends the *tathatā* (thatness) of all things.<sup>2</sup> He goes beyond the thought-constructions due to *citta* and *mano-vijñāna* and knows that all dharmas are same like *ākāśa* and thus he establishes himself in the *anutpattikadharmakṣānti* (the faith that things have no origination)<sup>3</sup>. As soon as he acquires *kṣānti* he is established in the eighth bhūmi (*Acalā* <sup>4</sup>) and is above all enjoyments. He is possessed of dharmas which are spontaneous (*anābhoga*), and hence, has no anxiety for matters relating to *kāya*, *vāk* and *citta*, is free from all thought-constructions produced by the movements of thought and is established in the *vipāka-dharmas* (completion). He does not, in fact, practise the rules of conduct (*samudācāras*) of Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and Śrāvakas.

<sup>1</sup> The *Mtu.* (I, p. 127) says nothing in particular about this bhūmi except that a bodhisattva practises self-control for doing good to beings.

The *Sāta.* (p. 1457) speaks of forty dharmas relating to the non-existence of soul and other worldly things, and the realisation of *śūnyatā* and allied matters. Hence, it gives the gist of the practices mentioned in the *Daśa*.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *B. Bh.*, p. 21. The *Mtu.* (I, p. 136) simply tells us that the Bodhisattva develops *mahākaruṇāsamprayuktaṃ cittaṃ* for going from the seventh to the eighth bhūmi and completes the account of the eighth bhūmi by mere enumeration of some legendary names.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *B. Bh.*, p. 22; see also pp. 49, 273.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *Laṅkā.*, pp. 221-2, 226.



He is now asked by the Buddhas to exert for acquiring the ten balas and four vaiśāradyas which he up till now has not acquired, and also to take into consideration the ruffled, afflicted, deluded state of mind of the ignorant people. He is then reminded of one of his previous resolutions that dharmatā (*i.e.* dharmas being without origin, decay and continuity) is not for Tathāgatas only but that the Śrāvakas and Pratyekabuddhas should also be made to realise it. He is then asked by Buddhas to exert for possessing like them immeasurable body, knowledge, worlds, refulgence, purity of voice and limbs, dharmālokas, kṣetras, sattvas and the variety of dharmas of the ten corners of the universe. The possession of 'immeasurables' is of great value, far surpassing all the merits and knowledge acquired in the previous seven bhūmis, because the merits and knowledge acquired hitherto were by means of exertion (sābhoga-karmanā) while in the present bhūmi the merits and knowledge are acquired spontaneously.

On account of his acquiring spontaneously the upāyakauśalyajñāna (knowledge of expedients) and as the result of his efforts to acquire omniscience, he comes to know how and when a world comes into being, continues to exist, and then disappears, and which karma is responsible for it. He understands the smallness, greatness, *i.e.*, every minute detail of the four elements, of the various classes of sentient beings, and their fields of action. Such detailed knowledge is needed by a bodhisattva, because he must appear among those sentient beings just as one of them in order to make them feel that he is same as them and that it is possible for every sentient being to become a Buddha<sup>1</sup>.

He develops ten vaśitās<sup>2</sup> (control) over āyu (span of life), cetas (mind), pariṣkāra (requisites), karma (action), upapatti (origin, *i.e.*, birth), adhimukti (aspiration), praṇidhāna (resolution), ṛddhi (miracles), dharma (doctrines) and jñāna (knowledge).

The bodhisattva at this stage can be said to possess

<sup>1</sup> *Daśa.*, pp. 67-70 refers to the minute details of this knowledge, which is called Sarvākārajñatā. The details are passed over here. See also *Kārikā* (Bibl. Buddhica), Ch. I.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *B. Bh.*, p. 22.



inconceivable, incomparable, immeasurable knowledge, and his actions are always faultless. He now possesses the *prañidhānas*, *adhiṣṭhānas*, *pāramitās*, *mahāmaitrī*, *mahākaruṇā*, *dhāraṇī*, *pratibhāna*, etc., in short, all dharmas which make a Buddha. Hence, this *bhūmi* is called *Acalā* and there is no possibility of his going back from this *bhūmi* (*avivartyabhūmi*). He is now a member of the Buddha family, and may be said to possess the Buddha *gotra*. He is henceforth constantly attended by all the gods and *Vajrapāṇi*.<sup>1</sup>

#### IX. SĀDHUMATĪ OR PRATISAMVIDVIHĀRA

A Bodhisattva after acquiring and developing the *apramāṇa jñānas*, *dhāraṇīs*, *samādhis*, *abhiññās*, minute knowledge of the *lokadhātus*, *balas*, and the *vaiśāradyas* of the Tathāgata mentioned in the previous *bhūmi*, enters into the ninth *bhūmi*.<sup>2</sup> At this stage, he knows truly whether the dharmas are good, bad or indifferent, pure or impure, worldly or transcendental, conceivable or inconceivable, definite (*niyata*) or indefinite (*aniyata*), constituted or unconstituted. He knows the duties of the *Śrāvakas*, *Pratyekabuddhas*, the Bodhisattvas, and the Tathāgatabhūmi. By the intelligence thus derived, he knows correctly the habits or the nature of thoughts of beings, their afflictions (*kleśa*), actions (*karma*), faculties (*indriya*), aspiration (*adhimukti*), elements (*dhātu*), desire and intention (*āśayānuśaya*), birth according to desires (*vāsanānusandhi*) and the *rāśis* (i.e., *gotras*). He knows the multifarious nature (*nānātva*) of thoughts (*citta*), afflictions, *karma*, etc.

The bodhisattva in this *bhūmi* is in a position to have a very minute knowledge of the aims and qualities of every being and so he is now capable of deciding the way in which a being is to be guided to the goal. He therefore modifies his teachings according to his judgment.

He also takes the form of a *dharmabhāṇaka*<sup>3</sup> (preacher of

<sup>1</sup> *Sata.*, p. 1458 gives the attainments of this *bhūmi*. They are similar to those described in the *Daśa*. Cf. *Laṅkā.*, p. 192.

<sup>2</sup> *Mtu.*, I, p. 141 mentions only some legendary names in this *bhūmi* and speaks of nothing else. Cf. *B. Bh.*, p. 23.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *B. Bh.*, p. 23 ; see also *ante*, p. 272.



dharma) in order to preserve the doctrines of the Teacher. On account of his immeasurable knowledge, he preaches the dharma in various ways, adopting the four pratisamvids (branches of logical analysis).<sup>1</sup> By the practices of this pratisamvids and working as a dharma-preacher, he becomes a receptacle of dharma utterances. Possessed of dhāraṇīs and pratibhānas he preaches the dharma to beings of all lokadhātus and does the same in an infinite number of ways.

Even in this bhūmi he continues his own spiritual practices and never gets out of the sight of Buddhas. He greatly develops the bala-pāramitā. If he wishes, he can now become a Mahābrahmā.<sup>2</sup>

#### X. DHARMAMEGHĀ OR PARAMA-VIHĀRA

A Bodhisattva on completion of the duties of the ninth bhūmi passes to the tenth.<sup>3</sup> Now he masters countless samādhis, and as the result, a lotus of infinite splendour and size appears and he is found to be seated on it with an equally resplendent body and established in the samādhi of omniscience (sarvajñajñānaviśeṣābhīṣeka)<sup>4</sup> surrounded by countless bodhisattvas who are yet in any one of the nine bhūmis and all looking at him. The rays of light issue forth from his body and make all beings happy.<sup>5</sup> While he is thus seated on the lotus, rays come forth from the Tathāgatas and consecrate him as a Samyaksambuddha possessed of omniscience, and hence this bhūmi is called Abhīṣekabhūmi.

<sup>1</sup> Viz., Dharma (nature or condition), Artha (analysis), Nirukti (etymological analysis) and Pratibhāna (context). It is difficult to find suitable expressions for the Pratisamvids. An idea, however, can be formed from the illustrative passages given in the *Daśa.*, pp. 77-8.

<sup>2</sup> See *Sata.*, p. 1458. It speaks of quite different matters, some of which appear in the *Mtu.*, I, p. 142, in connection with the tenth bhūmi.

<sup>3</sup> The *Mtu.*, I, p. 142, has nothing corresponding to the account of the *Daśa.* It mentions something connected with the Bodhisattva's descent from the Tuṣita heaven and birth in the world of mortal beings.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *B. Bh.*, 24.

<sup>5</sup> The wonders of raśmi are described here as well as in the *Prajñā-pāramitās* and other Mahāyāna works.



He now knows thoroughly how the world and its dharmas appear and disappear, the innumerable functions of a Buddha, the countless bodhisattva-vimokṣamukhas, samādhis, dhāraṇīs, etc. He is now possessed of such smṛti-kausālya (expedients of memory) that he can hold all dharmas showered on him (dharmameghā) by infinite Buddhas.<sup>1</sup> He can perform any kind of miracle. In this bhūmi he greatly develops the jñāna-pāramitā.<sup>2</sup>

It is after the tenth bhūmi that a bodhisattva becomes a Tathāgata, and so the *Laṅkāvatāra* calls this stage Tathāgatabhūmi.<sup>3</sup> The *Śatasāhasrikā*<sup>4</sup> also remarks that a bodhisattva in the tenth bhūmi can be called a Tathāgata.

In the Hīnayāna literature one does not expect any account corresponding to that of the last four bhūmis. The conception of Buddha among the Hīnayānists is more or less hazy and that is due to the fact that the introduction of the Bodhisattva conception in their literature was only an after-thought, suggested undoubtedly by the Mahāyānic speculations. They carefully avoided all metaphysical conceptions introduced by the Mahāyānists in connection with the Bodhisattva and Buddha conceptions, though they could not offer a similar treatment to the devotion-inspiring stories of the lives of the bodhisattvas. The Hīnayānists, consistent with their doctrinal principles, incorporated in their literature a life of Buddha preceded by a short account of the Bodhisattva lives under the headings, *Dūrenidāna* and *Avidūrenidāna*.<sup>5</sup> These two *Nidānas* are nothing but the gist of stories current among the Mahāyānists, and possess trace, though very slight, of borrowings. Apart from the expressions like Buddhābīja<sup>6</sup> and Abhinirhāra,<sup>7</sup> the passage in which Sumedha brāhmaṇa says, "I have no need of nibbāna by destroying the kilesas, like Dipaṅkara Dasa-

<sup>1</sup> Cf., *B. Bh.*, p. 24.

<sup>2</sup> *Śata.*, p. 1472 says that the bodhisattva in this bhūmi obtains, besides the pāramitas, Tathāgatabalas, four vaiśāradyas and four pratisamvids, eighteen āveṇikadharmas, sarvākārajñatā, sarvavāsanākleśānu-sandhiprahāṇa and sarvabuddhadharmaparipūraṇa.

<sup>3</sup> *Laṅkā.*, p. 227.

<sup>4</sup> *Śata.*, p. 1458.

<sup>5</sup> *Jāt.*, I, p. 2.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, I, p. 16.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, I, p. 14.



bala, I shall attain the highest sambodhi and by means of the boat of dharma, I shall lead the men across the sea of transmigration and attain parinibbāna,"<sup>1</sup> shows clearly Mahāyānic, or at least, semi-Mahāyānic traces. But the Hīnayānists rejected not only the metaphysical speculations but also the stereotyped list of pāramis of the Mahāyānists. The *Jātaka* as well as the *Mahābodhivaṃsa*<sup>2</sup> states that the Buddhakāra-ka dharma is only ten pāramis, viz., dāna, sīla, nekkhamma, paññā, viriya, khanti, sacca, adhiṭṭhāna, mettā and upekkhā. This is a list of their own making and does not agree with the Mahāyānic list.<sup>3</sup>

Of the extraordinary spiritual powers attained by a Buddha, the Hīnayānists say very little. We have in the *Nikāyas* the remark that Buddhas (including Paccekabuddhas) attain perfect knowledge by themselves, and by following the dharma unheard before.<sup>4</sup> A Samyaksambuddha preaches the dhamma and becomes the founder of a religion, and the leader of men and the gods. He is sabbaññu (omniscient)<sup>5</sup> and his knowledge in any matter whatsoever does not require any āvajjana (reflection); he possesses ten balas, and four vesārajjas. In the *Kathāvatthu*<sup>6</sup> there is a discussion on this topic, viz., whether the powers of a Tathāgata are the same as those of a Sāvaka—a point raised by the Andhakas on the basis of the *Anuruddha-samyutta*.<sup>7</sup> Among the powers of Buddhas referred to, there is nothing very special except the few mentioned above, and the Theravādins were driven to an uncomfortable position by the question of the Andhakas. In their literature the Hīnayanists tried to prove that a Buddha is a rare being and superior to the men and the gods, but they mention also that there is hardly any distinction between an Arhat and a Buddha except that the latter is a founder and teacher of a religion.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Jāt.* I, p. 14.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 25; *Mahābodhivaṃsa*, p. 9.

<sup>3</sup> See *ante*, pp. 12, 278.

<sup>4</sup> *Aṅguttara*, III, p. 9; *Pug.*, P., p. 14.

<sup>5</sup> *Majjhima*, I, p. 482 sabbaññū sabbadassāvī aparisesaṃ ñāṇadassanaṃ patijānāti.

<sup>6</sup> *Kvu.*, III, 1. 2.

<sup>7</sup> *Samyutta*, V, p. 304.

<sup>8</sup> For a comparison of the Śrāvakas, Pratyekabuddhas and Buddhas see ch. II, pp. 80-4. *Dial. of Buddha*, II, 1-3; III. 6.



TABULAR STATEMENT SHOWING THE CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN HĪNAYĀNIC AND MAHĀYĀNIC BHŪMIS

Hīnayānic Stages	Daśabhūmikasūtra, <i>Satasāhasrikā</i> and other Mahāyāna works.	Bodhisattvabhūmi	<i>Satasāhasrikā</i> (p. 1473) = <i>Meyut.</i> 50 (śrāvakahūmis) = <i>Tib. Dict.</i> (p. 475) of S. C. Das	Mahāvastu
Pre-sotāpanna or Puthujjana (up to completion of the 15 kṣaṇas of the darśanamārga, see pp. 254-5).	No name but there is a description of the practices, see pp. 246-7.	A. Prakṛticaryā sub-divided into	I. Śuklavipaśyanābhūmi but see Rahder, <i>Daśa.</i> , pp. xi, xvii.	A. Prakṛticaryā (see p. 244, n. 4).
Gotrabhū (Acc. to <i>Āṅguttara</i> and <i>Pug. P.</i> it precedes Sotāpattimaggā but acc. to other works adepts in one of the maggas and phalas are Gotrabhū).	....	(a) Gotravihāra and	II. Gotrabhūmi	....
....	Adhimukticaryābhūmi (in the <i>Madhyamakāvatāra</i> ). See pp. 243-4.	(b) Adhimukticaryāvihāra or Śuddhāśaya-bhūmi	....	B. Prañidhānacaryā (see p. 244, n. 4).
Sotāpattimaggā :— (i) Saddhānūsārī (ii) Dhammānūsārī (see pp. 250, 255).	I. Pramuditā .. ....	III. Pramuditā .. ....	III. Aṣṭamaka-bhūmi [ <i>Tib. Dict.</i> makes it the seventh bhūmi (?)].	I. Durārohā (see p. 247, n. 4).



I. Sotāpanna (or Sattakkhattu-parama):— (i) Saddhāvimutta (ii) Ditthippatta (see pp. 250-1). (a) Kolamkola (i) Devakolamkola (ii) Manussakolamkola (b) Ekavīcika or Ekabījī Koṣa puts this after Sakadāgāmi (see pp. 263-5).	..	B. Caryāpratipatti- bhūmi comprising IV. Adhisīlavihāra	IV. Darśana- bhūmi	C. Anulomacarya comprising II. Baddhamāna
II. Sakadāgāmi:— (i) Saddhāvimutta (ii) Ditthippatta (see pp. 250-1).	....	....	V. Tanubhūmi..	....
III. Anāgāmi:— (i) Saddhāvimutta (ii) Ditthippatta (see pp. 250-1). (a) Antarāparinibbāyi (b) Upahaccaparinibbāyi (c) Asaṅkhāraparinibbāyi (d) Sasaṅkhāraparinibbāyi (e) Uddhamso to Akanīṭha- gāmi. The last mentioned is again subdivided into (1) Akanīṭhagā (i) Pluta	..	V. Adhicittavihāra ..	VI. Vitarāga- bhūmi	III. Puṣpamaṇḍitā



Hīnayānic stages	Daśabhūmikasūtra, Sa- tasāhasrikā and other Mahāyāna works.	Bodhisattvabhūmi	Satasāhasrikā (p. 1473) = <i>Meyut.</i> 50 (śrāvakahūmis) = <i>Tib. Dict.</i> (p. 475) of S. C. Das.	Mahāvastu
(ii) Ardhapluta (iii) Sarvacyuta (2) Naivasamjñānāsamjñā- yatanupagā (see pp. 268-9). IV. Arahatta :— (i) Ubbatobhāgavimutta (ii) Paññāvimutta (see p. 276).	IV. Arcismatī  V. Sudurjayā  VI. Abhimukhī (see p. 275).	VI. Bodhipakṣya-prati- samyuktādhīprajñā- vihāra VII. Satyapratīsam- yuktādhīprajñāvihāra VIII. Pratītyasamut- pādapratīsam-yukt- ādhīprajñāvihāra (see pp. 269 ff.).	VII. Kṛtāvībhūmi  [The <i>Meyut.</i> and <i>Tib. Dict.</i> stop here].	IV. Rucirā V. Cittavistārā VI. Rūpavatī
Pratyekabuddha ..	....	....	VIII. Pratyeka- buddhabhūmi	....
....	....	....	IX. Bodhisattva- bhūmi	VII. Durjayā. D. Anivartanacaryā comprising VIII. Janmanideśa



....	VII. Dūraṅgamā ..	IX. Sābhisamkāra-sābhoga-nirnimitta-vihāra	....	....
	VIII. Acalā or Avaivartika	X. Anābhoga-nirnimittavihāra (or Niyatā)		
....	IX. Sādhumatī ..	XI. Pratisaṃvidvihāra (or Niyatacaryā)		IX. Yauvarājya
Samyak sambuddha	X. Dharmameghā (or Abhiṣeka-bhūmi)	XII. Parama-vihāra (or Niṣṭhāgamaṇa) or Tathāgata-bhūmi	X. Buddhābhūmi	X. Abhiṣeka
				N.B.—The powers and qualities attained in the various bhūmis according to the <i>Mahāvastu</i> do not tally with those mentioned in other works. The differences are pointed out in the footnotes.



## CHAPTER V

### The Vinaya of the Mahāyānists

(How far it is an Adaptation of the Hīnayāna Vinaya)

In the extensive literature of the Mahāyānists in Chinese and Tibetan translations, we find some sūtras, which can be classified under Vinaya, as has been done by Nanjio in his *Catalogue of the Chinese Buddhist Tripitaka*<sup>1</sup>, but in any case there remains the fact that the Mahāyānists lacked a well-codified Vinaya corresponding to that of the Hīnayānists. I-tsing, who was chiefly interested in the Vinaya, remarks that the Mahāyānists had no Vinaya of their own and that theirs was the same as that of the Hīnayānists<sup>2</sup>. But at the same time, one cannot ignore the fact that the Mahāyānists had a large number of sūtras, which served the purpose of the Vinaya. Nanjio refers to some of them while the *Śikṣāsamuccaya* and the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* furnish us with many such names. Some of these sūtras are:

(1) *Bodhisattvacaryānirdeśa*<sup>3</sup>, a treatise apparently dealing with the duties of a bodhisattva; and probably a work on the lines of Śāntideva's *Bodhicaryāvatāra*.

(2) *Bodhisattva-prātimokṣa-sūtra*<sup>4</sup>, containing many rules of

<sup>1</sup> Nanjio, *Catalogue*, col. 239f.

<sup>2</sup> I-Tsing, Takakusu's trans., pp. xix, xxii.

<sup>3</sup> Nanjio mentions two works under this name but the literal translations of the Chinese titles are (i) *Bodhisattva-kuśala-śīla Sūtra*, and (ii) *Bodhisattva Nimimdhara Sūtra*. (Nanjio gives "bhadra" for "kuśala" and "bhūmidhara" for "nimimdhara").

<sup>4</sup> In the Cambridge University Library there is a Ms. entitled *Bodhisattva Prātimokṣa Sūtra* procured by Bendall from Nepal. Through the kind intervention of Dr. E. J. Thomas I have been able to secure a rotograph copy of the same. It is a small work covering ten leaves. The title of the Ms. suggests that it should correspond to the Chinese texts Nos. 1500, 1501 of the Taisho edition of the Tripitaka (Nanjio, Nos. 1096, 1098) but on collation I find that there is absolutely no agreement. It, however, agrees very closely with the Chinese text No. 1499 (of the Taisho ed. vol. 24—Nanjio, 1097). The Sanskrit restoration from the Chinese title 菩薩戒羊曷磨



the *Prātimokṣa* type mixed up with admonitions characteristic of the Mahāyāna texts; it contains, *e.g.*, rules regarding the duties of a disciple towards his Ācārya, Upādhyāya, Sādharmika, etc., as also sermons on dāna, kṣānti, self-preservation, the duties of gr̥hi-bodhisattvas and so forth.

(3) *Bhikṣu Vinaya*, which contains among other things some regulations governing the conduct of a monk, *e.g.*, rules regarding the collection of alms, medicines<sup>1</sup>, etc.

(4) *Ākāśagarbha-sūtra*, dealing with āpattis and mūlāpattis along with the ceremonies connected with the worship of Ākāśagarbha bodhisattva for absolution from sins<sup>2</sup>.

(5) *Upāli-paripṛcchā*, wherein Upāli is generally the interlocutor and like the previous sūtra, it also deals with āpattis and anāpattis<sup>3</sup>, pāpadeśanā (confession), etc.

(6) *Ugradattaparipṛcchā*<sup>4</sup>, in which Ugradatta gr̥hapati (householder) is the interlocutor. It contains mostly the rules to be followed by gr̥hi-bodhisattvas, and refers incidentally to the life of monks in the forest and so forth.

(7) *Ratnamegha sūtra*<sup>5</sup>, dealing with the duties of a forest recluse, collection of alms, medicines and so forth.

(8) *Ratnarāśi sūtra*<sup>6</sup>, which contains among other things the duties and functions of a Vaiyāvṛtya monk (*i.e.*, a bhikṣu who wishes to undertake the duty of a secretary to the saṅgha), the rules to be observed when the monks go on their rounds for alms, etc.

There are many other works of a like nature from which

文 is *Bodhisattva-śīlakarma-paddhati* (Nanjio renders it as “A composition or treatise on the Bodhisattva’s śīlakarma”). So the *Bodhisattva Prātimokṣa Sūtra*, from which passages have been cited in the *Sikṣāsamuccaya* and *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, is not the one, of which we have found the Sanskrit Ms. but is very probably the original of the Chinese translations, Nos. 1500, 1501, entitled 菩薩戒本.

<sup>1</sup> See, *e.g.*, *Bodhic.*, p. 141; *Sikṣā.*, p. 135.

<sup>2</sup> *Sikṣā.*, pp. 59ff.; See Nanjio, 67, 68.

<sup>3</sup> *Bodhic.*, p. 139: Upāli-paripṛcchāyām āpattyanāpattivibhāgaḥ. See Nanjio, 1109. It is placed under the heading: Hīnayāna Vinaya.

<sup>4</sup> Nanjio, 23 (19) under Ratnakūṭa Class; see also Nos. 33, 34.

<sup>5</sup> Nanjio, 151, 152.

<sup>6</sup> Nanjio, 23(44) places it in the Ratnakūṭa class.



quotations are to be found in the *Śikṣāsamuccaya* and a list of which has been compiled by Bendall in his edition of the text. That the Mahāyānists looked for the rules of conduct in these sūtras is evidenced by the remark in the *Śikṣāsamuccaya* that “uktāni ca sūtrānteṣu bodhisattva-śikṣāpadāni” (the duties of the bodhisattvas are mentioned in the Sūtrāntas<sup>1</sup>). In the *Ratnameghasūtra* it is stated likewise that bodhisattvas should know that they cannot attain bodhi by merely observing the Prātimokṣa rules and that they are to perform the duties prescribed by the Tathāgata in the Sūtrāntas<sup>2</sup>. So also in the *Caturdharmakasūtra* it is said that the bodhisattva duties are to be found in the Sūtrāntas if they are frequently examined. How a bodhisattva is to conduct himself, and what śikṣāpadas are to be observed are all described in the Sūtrāntas<sup>3</sup>. Thus we clearly see that the Mahāyānists depended upon the rules scattered in the Mahāyāna texts and did not possess a code of the Vinaya rules.

From the remarks quoted above it is evident that the Mahāyānists adopted the *Prātimokṣa* rules of the Hīnayānists, though they pointed out their inadequacy for the attainment of Bodhi. The references in the *Śikṣāsamuccaya* to 5 or 10 śikṣāpadas, to 250 śikṣāpadas for bhikṣus, or to 500 śikṣāpadas for bhikṣuṇīs distinctly show that they were using some sort of a code, which was similar to, or had much in common with, the Hīnayānic *Prātimokṣa*<sup>4</sup>. The name of one of their texts, viz., the *Bodhisattva Prātimokṣa sūtra* may lead one to think that it is an adaptation of the Hīnayānic *Prātimokṣa sūtra*, but from the few quotations that we have in the *Śikṣāsamu-*

<sup>1</sup> *Śikṣā.*, pp. 17, 41; *Bodhic.*, pp. 91, 159.

<sup>2</sup> *Śikṣā.*, p. 17; *Bodhic.*, p. 92: “kim tarhi yānīmāni tathāgatena teṣu teṣu sūtrānteṣu bodhisattvasamudācārā bodhisattva-śikṣāpadāni prajñaptāni teṣu teṣu mayā śikṣitavyam iti”.

<sup>3</sup> *Śikṣā.*, p. 41: sūtrāṇaṃ ca sadekṣaṇād bodhisattvaśikṣāpadāni hi prāyaḥ sūtreṣv eva dṛśyante, teṣu teṣu sūtrānteṣu bodhisattva-samudācārā bodhisattvaśikṣāpadāni prajñaptāni ti vacanāt”.

<sup>4</sup> *Śikṣā.*, pp. 174–5 (*Bhaiṣajyaguru-vaidūryaprabharājasūtra*). About the number of the *Prātimokṣa* rules in the *Vinayas* of various schools, see E. Waldschmidt, *Bruchstücke des Bhikṣuṇī-prātimokṣa*, pp. 2, 3.



*ccaya* it may be said that it is not a code of monastic rules like the *Prātimokṣa sūtra* but a mixture of monastic rules with those about the general conduct of the bodhisattvas both lay and ordained<sup>1</sup>. The *Śikṣāsamuccaya* further hints that it is a compilation made from the *Ratnarāsi* and other sūtras<sup>2</sup>.

The Mahāyānists, however, give only a secondary place to the observance of the *Prātimokṣa* rules. They say that a bodhisattva would be guilty of *mūlāpatti* (grave offence) if he says to anybody "What will you do by following the *Prātimokṣa-Vinaya*? Develop your mind for samyaksambodhi, read the Mahāyāna texts. If there be any evil already done by you in word, thought, or body it will be purified by your reading the texts<sup>3</sup>". But again it is also enjoined that a bodhisattva should not wholly depend upon the *Prātimokṣa-Vinaya*, for if a bodhisattva observes the *Prātimokṣa* rules for many kalpas, living on roots and fruits of trees but with the mind attached to śrāvakayāna, he is guilty of a grave offence<sup>4</sup>. Besides these remarks, one can also perceive from the customs of the Dhyāna school about the ordination of monks, how the *prātimokṣa* is relegated to a secondary position. De Groot tells us that the Dhyāna school recognised the 250 *Prātimokṣa* rules as the code of their clergy<sup>5</sup>. The monks are first ordained according to the *Prātimokṣa* rules, and after two or three days, they pass through a second ordination according to the *Brahmajāla sūtra*, the accredited Vinaya of the later Mahāyānists, in order to attain to the dignity of a bodhisattva. Thus we see that the Mahāyānists could not or did not do away with the *Prātimokṣa* rules.

The only Mahāyānic works accessible to us that can be called a code of disciplinary rules are the Chinese *Brahmajāla sūtra* and the two works of Śāntideva, viz., *Śikṣāsamuccaya* and *Bodhicaryāvatāra*. Śāntideva is a well-known figure in the Buddhist world of the seventh century, and these two works of his are collections of excerpts from a large number of Mahāyāna sūtras, gathered with a view to present a picture of

<sup>1</sup> See e.g. *Śikṣā*., pp. 37, 55, 144, 188.

<sup>2</sup> *Śikṣā*., p. 55.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 61.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 66.

<sup>5</sup> De Groot, *Le code du Mahāyāna en Chine*, p. 8.



the duties and functions of a bodhisattva<sup>1</sup>. As regards the *Brahmajāla sūtra*, De Groot informs us that though it had existed from the first century A.D., "it was not thought much of before 730 A.D."<sup>2</sup> This book was translated by Kumārajīva and formed part of the great work *Bodhisattva-hṛdaya-bhūmi*<sup>3</sup>. The fact that Śāntideva had no occasion to refer to this work shows that it was not very popular in his times, or probably, it was not known to him as the other works on Bodhisattva duties were. Like other Mahāyānic sūtras on disciplinary rules, it also attempted to combine the ideal life of a bodhisattva, who might be a monk or a layman with that of a monk as a member of the saṅgha. As the preliminary practices of a bodhisattva, it speaks of the twenty cittāśayas ("sentiers du debut"<sup>4</sup>) so many of which are found in the *Daśabhūmikasūtra*<sup>5</sup>, and it says that a bodhisattva must develop these before he can seriously think of attaining bodhi. These cittāśayas are followed by the mention of ten other qualities, called Vajras, which make the bodhisattva firm in his zeal and path. After acquiring these thirty qualities, the bodhisattva is to progress along the ten bhūmis.

The *Prātimokṣa* rules are enumerated in detail after these forty acquirements. The first part of the *Prātimokṣa* rules deals with the ten serious offences, making a bodhisattva guilty of Pārājikā. The first four of them are identical with the four Pārājikā offences of the *Pātimokkha sutta* in Pāli. They are abrahmacarya (misconduct), adattādāna (stealing), vadha (killing), and uttaramanuṣyadharmālāpa (laying claim to powers and knowledge not usually possessed by human beings). The additional six are:—

(1) trading in intoxicating drinks or inducing others to do the same;

(2) divulging the offences committed, or the way in which they were committed by a grhī, bhikṣu-bodhisattva, monk, or nun;

<sup>1</sup> Bendall's *Intro. to Śikṣā.*, p. v.

<sup>2</sup> De Groot, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

<sup>3</sup> Nanjio, *Catalogue*, No. 1087.

<sup>4</sup> De Groot, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

<sup>5</sup> See *anté*, ch. iv.



- (3) vaunting one's own qualities and disparaging others<sup>1</sup>;
- (4) giving nothing to the destitute, and even injuring them;
- (5) not forgiving a person who has injured the bodhisattva but asked for pardon; and
- (10) speaking ill of the Triratna.

The second part deals with forty-eight other rules, which are considered secondary<sup>2</sup>. Most of them are found in the *Pātimokkha sutta* or the *Śikṣāsamuccaya*. They deal with rules regulating eating and drinking, confessing, treatment to be accorded to friends, teachers, etc., means of livelihood, forming praṇidhānas, and so forth<sup>3</sup>. The *Sūtra* under consideration is like many other Mahāyāna sūtras an attempt to synthesise the life and ideal of a bodhisattva with those of a Hīnayānic bhikṣu. It is also a compilation like the *Śikṣāsamuccaya* but it has confined itself more to the actual rules than the *Śikṣāsamuccaya* does.

The chief reasons for the inability of the Mahāyānists to depend solely on the Hīnayāna code are the following:—

- (1) The Mahāyānists kept in view the conduct not only of a bhikṣu- (or pravrajita-) bodhisattva but also that of a gr̥hi-bodhisattva.
- (2) The development of bodhicitta and the completion of the Pāramitās played the chief rôle in the practices of a bodhisattva.
- (3) Too much stress was laid upon Karuṇā and Maitrī, which, in many cases, received approbation at the expense of the most fundamental rules of conduct<sup>4</sup>.

#### GR̥HI-BODHISATTVAS

The early Hīnayānists, as we have pointed out elsewhere<sup>5</sup>, gave very little attention to the spiritual needs of the laity. They adhered to the principle that the duties that should be performed by a person for the attainment of Nibbāna

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Śikṣā.*, p. 98 : ātmānam utkarṣayema param vā paṃsayema.

<sup>2</sup> De Groot, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 33ff. for details.

<sup>4</sup> See, e.g., *Śikṣā.*, p. 167.

<sup>5</sup> See *supra*, ch. I, p. 3.



cannot be adequately done by one living a family life and not retiring from the world<sup>1</sup>. The discourses suitable for the householders were, according to them, the *dānakatham*, *silakatham*, *saggakatham*, *kāmānam ādīnavam okāram samkilesam*, and *nekkhamme ānisamsam*<sup>2</sup> (discourses on gifts, moral precepts, heaven, dangers and evil consequences of desires, and the good fruits of retirement). It is only when the mind of the householders has been suitably prepared by the discourses on the last two topics that the Ariya-saccas are explained to them. The questions may be asked, viz., how could there be lay-adherents like Anāthapiṇḍika, Bimbisāra, Visākhā, who had a prominent place in the then Buddhist society, and how is it that there are a few discourses in the *Nikāyas* on the duties of a householder, on an ideal wife, and so forth<sup>3</sup>? Without questioning the antiquity of some of these discourses, we may assert that they contain very little except some general advice for the spiritual uplift of a person. The monks used to approach the householders more with a view to persuade them to leave the household life and become recluses than to continue to be householders and perform duties conducive to Nibbāna. Later on, of course, one finds the laity formally taking the vow of five sīlas, or temporarily eight sīlas<sup>4</sup>, but still they are not expected to derive the full benefits of the religion without going through ordination. Anāthapiṇḍika in spite of all his gifts and virtues was only a sotāpanna at the time of his death<sup>5</sup>. This state of things, of course, could not continue long, and among the Hīnayānists, there arose a new movement, which could be called semi-Mahāyānic, for

<sup>1</sup> Sambādho gharāvāso rajāpatho, etc. See *Majjhima*, I, p. 179; *Anguttara*, II, p. 208.

<sup>2</sup> *Early History*, etc., pp. 36 f.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 118ff.; N. Law, *Studies*, etc., pp. 95 ff.

<sup>4</sup> At present this is common at Chittagong, and in Burma and Ceylon. Wiegner in his *Bouddhisme Chinois* (I, pp. 147, 148) also refers to the ceremony performed by a layman by confessing his past sins, accepting the faith and the five precepts, and temporarily the eight precepts.

<sup>5</sup> *Samyutta*, V, p. 387.



creating an important place for the laity in the Buddhist system by the introduction of the practice of the Pāramitās<sup>1</sup>.

The Mahāyānists developed these Pāramitā practices a good deal and tried to persuade both householders and monks to fulfil them. In the *Śikṣāsamuccaya* we get glimpses of the duties of a Bodhisattva apart from the completion of Pāramitās. Some of these passages may be summarized as follows:—

(1) Gifts result in the destruction of *trṣṇā* (desire), removal of fear, anxiety, and so forth; therefore householders should make gifts as much as possible.

If a householder feels an excessive affection for his son but for none others, he must correct himself by reflecting that Bodhi is attained by one (i) who is *samacitta* (even-minded), (ii) who is exerting himself rightly (*samyak-prayukta*) to attain bodhi, and (iii) who does not make distinctions (*anānātvacārin*). He is to regard his son as an enemy (lit. not friend), as he being the object of excessive affection, is the cause of detracting his father's mind from the doctrines of Buddha. He is to correct himself by thinking that "he himself comes from one place and his son from another; that all beings are his sons, and he is the son of all beings." Thus a *grhī bodhisattva* must not regard anything as his own<sup>2</sup>.

This is followed by an interesting passage showing how a *grhī bodhisattva* is to absolve himself from his sins when he fails to give away the thing asked for. At first he must reflect within himself that the thing, whether he gives it up or not, must one day leave him. If he can dispose of it, he will be happy at the time of his death. But even if after this reflection, he fails to give away the article, he is to confess his weakness thus: "I am of weak mind; my *kuśalamūlas* are not ripe; I am only a beginner (*ādikarmika*) in Mahāyāna; my mind as far as the gifts are concerned is not yet under control; I am still attached to *upādānas* and to "I-ness" and "Mine-ness," excuse me, O good man, do

<sup>1</sup> See *ante*, pp. 11 ff.

<sup>2</sup> *Śikṣā*, pp. 18-19 (*Ugradattaparipṛcchā*).



not be sorry; I shall develop my power of self-denial, so that I may fulfil your desire." He should also see that neither he has *aprasāda* (displeasure) against the seeker of the gift nor the seeker against him. But in any case, such miserliness is condemned by Buddhas<sup>1</sup>.

There are many admonitions with regard to the nature of gifts to be made by laymen and as to the time when and the place where they are most efficacious<sup>2</sup>.

(2) A *grhī bodhisattva* is to give up *anunaya* (supplication) and *pratigha* (repugnance), and remain unattached to eight *lokadharmas*<sup>3</sup>. He should not be elated by the gain of a wife, son, wealth and property, or depressed by misfortunes, for he is always to think that all constituted things are illusory and have the sign of appearance and disappearance (*viṭhavana-pratyupasthāna=rnam-par bsgrub-pa ñe-bar-gnas-paḥi mtshan ñid*)<sup>4</sup>. It is only a matter of practice, and the *bodhisattvas* can avoid both elation and despondency by making the mind invincible<sup>5</sup> against passions.

(3) A *grhī bodhisattva* seeks enjoyable things "rightly and not wrongly; he has right living and not wrong living"<sup>6</sup>.

(4) The four evils from which a layman should refrain are:

- (a) to cause hindrance to persons desirous of renunciation, of seeking ordination, or of following the *mārga* to *Nirvāṇa*;
- (b) not to believe in the fruits of actions and stand in the way of ordination of one's own sons, wife or relatives out of affection or love of wealth;
- (c) rejection of the *saddharma*; and
- (d) hatred (*pratigha*) towards *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas*.

<sup>1</sup> *Sīkṣā.*, p. 20 (*Ugradattaparipṛcchā*).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 87, 144, 147-8.

<sup>3</sup> *Mvyut.* 125: *Lābha*, *Alābha*, *Yaśa*, *Ayaśa*, *Nindā*, *Praśamsā*, *Sukha* and *Duḥkha*. See *Dh. S.* 61.

<sup>4</sup> The English rendering is conjectural.

<sup>5</sup> *Sīkṣā.*, p. 180. Cf. *Gaṇḍavyūha*: *na cābhyāsasya duṣkaram nāma kiñcid asti*.

<sup>6</sup> *Sīkṣā.*, p. 267; *Transl.*, p. 245.



(5) Gr̥his should refrain from

(a) drinking spirits, etc.,

(b) visiting places of vulgar amusements,

(c) bad temper, fickleness, wavering, garrulousness, etc.,  
and should always be self-possessed<sup>1</sup>.

(6) A gr̥hī must refrain from adultery and be satisfied with his wife. Even when living with her, he should always reflect that she is a source of evil, full of impurities and so forth. He should also bear in mind that she is a companion for passion and dalliance and not for the next world, a companion at food and drink and not for the fruits of karma; and that she is a hindrance to śīla, dhyāna, prajñā, etc.<sup>2</sup>.

(7) A gr̥hī should be discreet about the enjoyment or giving away of wealth. He should also take into consideration whether the giving away or abstention from same would stand in the way of attaining bodhi by himself or his sons, wife, or employees<sup>3</sup>.

(8) For the benefit of others, the gr̥hī bodhisattva should renounce his own profit<sup>4</sup>.

(9) Bodhisattvas derive great merit and even develop bodhicitta by worshipping or honouring stūpas<sup>5</sup>.

(10) A kulaputra or kuladuhitṛ practises the eight śīlas for one year or three years with a view to be re-born in the Sukhāvati-vyūha<sup>6</sup>.

(11) Gr̥his should practise the daśakuśalakarmapathas<sup>7</sup>.

(12) Gr̥hastha-ādikarmika-bodhisattvas should study the Buddhist scriptures.

The *Ugradattaparipṛcchā*, from which the above information is mostly collected, is apparently a book of conduct for use by the lay bodhisattvas<sup>8</sup>. The question—"katham āśayasampannasyāpy *ugradattaparipṛcchāyām* gr̥ham anujñātam" (how is it that in the *Ugradattaparipṛcchā* those who have aspiration for buddhahood are also allowed to continue the family life?)—makes it clear that laymen, unlike the early Hīnayānists,

<sup>1</sup> *Sīkṣā.*, p. 120 = *Bodhic.*, p. 123.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 78 (*Ugradattaparipṛcchā*).

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 144.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 145.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 93, 94.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 175.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 87.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 62.



had a place in the disciplinary code of the Mahāyānists, though, of course, preference was given to the life of a recluse in the forest rather than to that of a dweller in the town<sup>1</sup>. With the Hinayānists they also hold that 'na jātu kāmān pratisevamānaḥ putreṣu dāreṣu janitvā tṛṣṇāṃ grhaṃ ca sevitvā jugupsanīyam anuttarāṃ prāpayati so'grabodhiṃ.' (Never will he obtain the supreme wisdom by living the detested life of a family man, by enjoying the pleasure of the world, and by hankering after wife and sons)<sup>2</sup>. On the contrary, they extol life in a forest in extravagant terms<sup>3</sup>.

#### ROYAL LAITY

These are a few of the rules of conduct laid down for the lay bodhisattvas and noticed incidentally in the *Śikṣāsamuccaya*. There are also many rules for developing bodhicitta or practising the pāramitās applicable to both Gṛhī and Pravrajita-bodhisattvas, to which we shall refer later on. It should be noted that the Mahāyānists were careful to consult the whims and conveniences of kings and princes by providing some special rules for them<sup>4</sup>. In the *Rājāvavādakasūtra*, e.g., it is stated that kings have many important duties to perform, and so they cannot practise the pāramitās fully. Therefore, when walking, sitting, lying, eating or drinking they should develop desire for sambodhi, cultivate faith in the possibility of its attainment and form resolutions accordingly. They should concentrate their minds upon qualities of all buddhas, bodhisattvas, pratyekabuddhas and śrāvakas, and transfer the merits thus acquired to the benefit of all beings and thereby help them in the attainment of omniscience. In this way, a king can discharge the duties of his kingdom as well as he can acquire merits for attaining bodhi and bodhicitta<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> *Bodhic.*, p. 123: Ugraparipṛcchāyāṃ grhiṇaṃ bodhisattvam adhi-kṛtyoktaṃ = *Śikṣā.*, p. 120.

<sup>2</sup> *Śikṣā.*, p. 193: Tad evaṃ Ugradattaparipṛcchāvidhinā grhadoṣān bhāvayitvā śrutavatā cittam śodhayitum aranyam āśrayaṇīyam iti.

<sup>3</sup> *Śikṣā.*, p. 193; *Bodhic.*, p. 285. On the virtues of forest life, see *Śikṣā.*, ch. xi.

<sup>4</sup> In the Pāli *Vinaya* also, one notices that kings' wishes and conveniences were consulted in the framing of rules.

<sup>5</sup> *Śikṣā.*, pp. 9-10 = *Bodhic.*, pp. 26.



In the *Ākāśagarbhasūtra* are mentioned the five great offences (mūlāpatti) that may be committed by a king himself or through his officers, and for which he can be condemned to hell. They are.—

- (a) stealing property belonging to a saṅgha or a stūpa ;
- (b) reviling the dharma of any one of the three yānas ;
- (c) disrobing a monk, who has shaved his head and taken yellow robes according to the Buddhist law, no matter whether or not he be observant of the precepts, and make him a family man and then punish him ;
- (d) committing deliberately any one of the five deadly sins ;
- (e) disbelieving the causes of actions (ahetuvādī) and the existence of the next world ; and
- (f) practising the ten akuśalakarmapathas and persuading others to do the same <sup>1</sup>.

In the *Ratnakūṭasūtra* is shown how a monk is to receive a king or his officer if he is visited by either in the forest. He should offer him a seat, and should the king take his seat, he should also sit, otherwise not. If the king be fickle-minded (cañcalendriya) he is only to be complimented by being told that he is fortunate in having many śramaṇas and brāhmaṇas in his kingdom, and in being free from the infliction of thieves and rebels. If the king be high-principled and serious, then the dharma should be preached to him in various ways suited to his temperament <sup>2</sup>.

#### DEVELOPMENT OF BODHICITTA

The Mahāyānists think very highly of the virtue of developing Bodhicitta which throws into the shade all disciplines. An idea about their conception of the efficacy of possessing bodhicitta can be formed from the following stanza :—

kṛtvāpi pāpāni sudāruṇāni  
yadāśrayād uttarati kṣaṇena,  
śūrāśrayeṇeva mahābhayāni  
nāśrīyate tat katham ajñāsattvaiḥ.

[After committing atrocious crimes, one can absolve himself from them in one moment by developing (lit. taking refuge in)

<sup>1</sup> *Sikṣā.*, pp. 59-60 = *Bodhic.*, pp. 159, 160.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 197.



bodhicitta, just as some persons can escape punishments by being protected by powerful persons. It is only the ignorant who do not take to such an excellent refuge, the bodhicitta<sup>1</sup>]. The Mahāyāna texts are replete with references to the excellences of the bodhicitta, a topic with which the early Hīnayānists had no concern. By bodhicitta the Mahāyānists mean the forming of a resolution to attain bodhi and save every being of the world from misery by leading him to Nirvāṇa or Bodhi.

Though originally the development of bodhicitta was regarded as a matter of long practice and the outcome of qualities that one could possess rarely, it became later a matter of ceremony, and the persons seeking bodhicitta went through some formalities, an idea of which is given in the works of Śāntideva. The formalities are :—

- (i) Vandana and Pūjana (worshipping) of Buddhas and Caityas<sup>2</sup>;
- (ii) Śaraṇagamana (taking refuge) and Pāpadeśanā (confession)<sup>3</sup>;
- (iii) Puṇyānumodanā (expressions of sincere approval of others' good deeds)<sup>4</sup>;
- (iv) Buddhādhyeṣanā or Yācanā (entreating Buddhas to be the guides of all beings, ignorant as they are<sup>5</sup>; and
- (v) Bodhipariṇāmanā (offering up one's merits for bodhi)<sup>6</sup>.

I. Vandana or Pūjana is effected by mentally dedicating all things of the world including his own self<sup>7</sup> to Buddhas with their disciples, and the promise of repenting for past sins and

<sup>1</sup> *Bodhic.*, pp. 20.

<sup>2</sup> According to the *Sīkṣā.*, p. 290, Vandana is included in Pāpadeśanā (Vandana pāpadeśanāyām antar bhavati).

<sup>3</sup> *Sīkṣā.*, p. 290 says that in the *Akṣayamatīśūtra*, ātmaparapāpadeśanā is included in puṇyasambhāra.

<sup>4</sup> *Bodhic.*, pp. 74-6; *Sīkṣā.*, pp. 291, 313; see *Aṣṭa.*, pp. 135, 142, 149 for anumodanā and pariṇāmanā.

<sup>5</sup> *Sīkṣā.*, p. 290: yācanam adhyeṣanāyām ekārthatvāt; also p. 315.

<sup>6</sup> These formalities are collectively called Triskandha. See *Sīkṣā.*, p. 290 and also pp. 13, 291 ff.; *Bodhic.*, pp. 73, 152, 154.

<sup>7</sup> *Bodhic.*, p. 48: dadāmi cātmanam ahaṃ jinebhyaḥ, sarveṇa sarvaṃ tad ātmajebhyaḥ.



refraining from committing any further evil deeds. The Pūjā<sup>1</sup> (worship) is to be performed by bathing the Tathāgatas and Bodhisattvas, viz., Samantabhadra, Ajita, Mañjuḥṣa, etc., in a magnificent bathroom (snānagrha) with scents, unguents, flowers, incense, etc., accompanied by music. This is to be followed by the offering of robes, bowls, food and other requisites. Having thus finished the Snānapūjā, Mālyapūjā and so forth<sup>2</sup>, one is to perform the Dipapūjā (illumination). Then commences the Dharmapūjā, which consists in decorating or making offerings to the caityas and images of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. This is followed by Stutipūjā<sup>3</sup> (chanting hymns in praise of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas) and Praṇāmapūjā (uttering the formulæ of salutation) addressed to Buddha Dharma, Saṅgha and Tathāgatastūpa<sup>4</sup>. The *Śikṣāsamuccaya* devotes three chapters<sup>5</sup> to the description of the results obtained by worshipping a stūpa<sup>6</sup>, or repairing a dilapidated stūpa, by drawing a picture or making an image of Buddha, by praising a Buddha and persuading others to do the same<sup>7</sup>, but it gives first place to the three great pūjās, viz., (i) development of bodhicitta, (ii) practising the religion, and (iii) having a compassionate heart towards all beings.

The mental pūjās were all converted into rituals, and ended in the ceremonious worship of the images and caityas of various Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. The underlying object of these Pūjās is, of course, to develop *Śraddhā* (reverential faith) in one's mind for Buddha, his Dharma and his followers. Be it Hīnayāna or Mahāyāna, *Śraddhā* is at the basis of all practices<sup>8</sup>. In the *Nikāyas*, one of the stock passages is that a disciple

<sup>1</sup> *Śikṣā.*, p. 290 does not detail the Pūjā and dismisses it simply by saying 'tatra vandana sarvabuddhān namasyāmīti.'

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Śikṣā.*, p. 290.

<sup>3</sup> For an instance of stuti, see *Śikṣā.*, pp. 318ff.

<sup>4</sup> *Bodhic.*, pp. 44-57.

<sup>5</sup> *Śikṣā.*, chs. xvii, xviii, xix.

<sup>6</sup> It may be observed in this connection that the *Bodhic.* attaches more importance to reverence shown to Bodhisattvas than to the worship of Caityas, the argument put forward being that Caityas depend for their origin on Buddhas, who issue from Bodhisattvas. For a discussion of the topic that Buddhas issue from Bodhisattvas, see *M. Ava. (Le Muséon, Vol. VIII)*.

<sup>7</sup> *Śikṣā.*, pp. 309, 311, 313.

<sup>8</sup> *Bodhic.*, p. 87; *Śikṣā.*, p. 2.



must have firm faith (*aveccapasādena samannāgto bhavati*) in Buddha, Dhamma and Saṅgha<sup>1</sup>. Perfection in the practice of Śraddhendriya is laid down in the Hīnayāna works, as one of the conditions which a candidate for Arhathood must fulfil. The *Śikṣāsamuccaya* quotes sūtra after sūtra to establish the necessity of 'śraddhādīnāṃ sadābhyāsaḥ' (*i.e.* faith, etc., should be constantly practised)<sup>2</sup>. From the *Akṣayamatisūtra* it cites the definition of Śraddhendriya which runs as follows: One can be said to have Śraddhendriya if he believes that (a) there is a right view (*samyagdrṣṭi*) for men of the world; (b) one enjoys the fruits of his actions; (c) there is merit in performing the duties of a bodhisattva; (d) things in reality are devoid of any essence (*śūnya*) and therefore are non-existent. The first two of these debar him from committing any evils for the sake of livelihood, the third from developing a desire for any practice other than Mahāyānic, and the fourth from following any doctrine other than Mahāyānic<sup>3</sup>. Śraddhā comprises the three anusmṛtis (*i.e.* constantly thinking of the excellent qualities) of Buddha<sup>4</sup>, Dharma<sup>5</sup> and Saṅgha<sup>6</sup>, the Hīnayānists adding to these the three others, *viz.*, cāga (gifts), śīla (precepts) and deva (gods)<sup>7</sup>. In short, faith (Śraddhā and Prasāda) in Buddha, Dharma and Saṅgha is the first essential to be fulfilled by a person aspiring for Buddhahood or Arhathood.

II. After acquiring firm faith, an adept is to take refuge (*Śaraṇagamana*) by uttering the formulæ of Trisāraṇa<sup>8</sup> and confessing (*Pāpadeśanā*) his past sins. The *Pāpadeśanā* consists in the candidate's formal confession of all his sins, bodily, mental or verbal, actually committed or approved by him in his previous lives and in the present one, through ignorance or delusion, and in repentance of same, being convinced of the fact that akuśalakarmas lead a being to hell<sup>9</sup>. He is frightened

<sup>1</sup> For passages in the *Nikāyas* emphasising *Śraddhā*, see, *e.g.*, *Anguttara*, I, p. 207; III, p. 153; *Majjhima*, I, p. 320; *Theragāthā*, 507, 1253-4.

<sup>2</sup> *Śikṣā.*, p. 316.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 316.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 318 ff.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 322 ff.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 324 ff.

<sup>7</sup> *Dīgha*, III, p. 250.

<sup>8</sup> *Bodhic.*, pp. 58, 65; p. 66 adds the taking of refuge in Bodhisattvas.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 59, 72; cf. *Svayambhūpurāṇa*, p. 116. For the formulæ of *Śaraṇagamana* and *Pāpadeśanā*, see *Śikṣā.*, pp. 169, 170.



by the prospect of hellish sufferings, and in despair, takes refuge in the three Ratnas and the Bodhisattvas, viz., Samantabhadra, Mañjuḥṣa, Avalokita, Ākāśagarbha, Kṣitigarbha and Vajrapāṇi.<sup>1</sup> He absolves himself from his sins by this Śaraṇagamana<sup>2</sup> and Confession.

III. Puṇyānumodanā follows Pāpadeśanā. It consists in the expression of sincere joy by words, mind, or body<sup>3</sup> on seeing beings who after suffering hellish pains enjoy happiness through their good actions, or on seeing people developing citta for Śrāvakabodhi or Pratyekabodhi, or on seeing the great beings, the self-finders of the path,<sup>4</sup> continuing to be bodhisattvas or becoming Buddhas and exerting themselves for the welfare of beings.<sup>5</sup>

IV, V. After Puṇyānumodanā, the adept is to perform Adhyeṣaṇā<sup>6</sup> or Yācanā, i.e., to entreat Buddhas not to attain parinirvāṇa but to be the light (of knowledge = dharmapradīpa) to the innumerable beings, who cannot distinguish between the right and the wrong ways on account of their ignorance.<sup>7</sup> This is followed by Pariṇāmanā, when he offers all his merits for the good of all beings and for obtaining the powers and privileges of a Buddha and thus be able to satisfy all beings by meeting the individual needs of each one, no matter whether the need be worldly happiness or salvation.<sup>8</sup>

#### BODHISATTVA-CARYĀ

The *Bodhicaryāvatāra* then points out that a patient cannot derive the full benefit of a medicine, however good it may be, if he does not follow the directions of the physician. So also an adept cannot attain bodhi by simply developing

<sup>1</sup> *Bodhic.*, pp. 66, 67.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 67.

<sup>3</sup> E.g., Romaharṣa, āśrupāta, gātrakampana. *Ibid.*, p. 74.

<sup>4</sup> Tāyinām = svādhigatamārgadeśakānām, or Tāyaḥ = samtānārthaḥ. Āsamsāram apratiṣṭhitānirvāṇatayāvasthāyinām. *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> *Bodhic.*, pp. 76; *Sīkṣā.*, p. 315.

<sup>6</sup> For Adhyeṣaṇāmantra, see *Sīkṣā.*, p. 65.

<sup>7</sup> This Adhyeṣaṇā or Yācanā is to be found in many Mahāyāna works, see, e.g., *Lal. Vis.*, Ch. xiii: Saṃcodanāparivartaḥ; *Sīkṣā.*, p. 292.

<sup>8</sup> *Bodhic.*, pp. 77, 78; *Sīkṣā.*, pp. 296, 315, 348, 356.



bodhicitta and not practising the Bodhisattvasaṃvaras or Śikṣās as laid down by the Teacher.<sup>1</sup> It however asks the readers to consult the *Śikṣāsamuccaya* for details<sup>2</sup> and gives briefly the definition of *Āpatti*. It says that a bodhisattva would be guilty of an offence (āpatti) if for relieving beings from pain, present or future, and for producing joys and comforts for them for the present or the future, he does not strive sincerely by his body, word, or thought, to procure the things needed, remedy the obstacles, suffer pain or loss to avert the pain and loss to others, and utilise the opportune moment. It will be anāpatti (non-offence) if a bodhisattva's efforts be fruitless in matters beyond his power. The āpatti, of which he may be guilty for not properly exerting in a matter really beyond his power, can be remedied by confession.<sup>3</sup>

#### PĀRAMITĀS

The most essential and primary caryā of a bodhisattva is the completion of the six pāramitās. The Mahāyāna texts enter into the minutest details about the duties of a Bodhisattva for completing each pāramitā in the right way<sup>4</sup>. We shall quote here only one passage from the *Śikṣāsamuccaya* to illustrate what the Mahāyāna texts mean by perfection in a pāramitā:—

(i) Yaḥ kāyasyotsargaḥ kāyaparityāgaḥ kāyānapekṣā iyam asya dānapāramitā (It is bodhisattva's perfection in gift when he offers, gives up, or remains indifferent to his body);

(ii) Yat kāye chidyamāne sarvasattvān maitryā spharati vedanābhiś ca na saṃhriyate iyam asya śīlapāramitā (It is his perfection in precepts when he irradiates love towards all beings, and does not contract himself in pain even when his body is dismembered);

(iii) Yat kāye chidyamāne ya evāśya kāyaṃ chindati teṣāṃ eva pramokṣārthaṃ kṣamate na ca cittaṇa kṣanyate

<sup>1</sup> *Bodhic.*, pp. 91ff.; also p. 87.

<sup>2</sup> See *infra*, p. 320.

<sup>3</sup> *Bodhic.*, pp. 93, 94 = *Śikṣā.*, p. 15 (Bodhisattvaśikṣāśarīraṃ). The āpattis and anāpattis are dealt with in the *Upālipariṣeṣā*. See *Bodhic.*, pp. 139, 153.

<sup>4</sup> There are many directions for the paṇīśuddhi of pāramitās.



*kṣāntibalaṃ copadaśayatiyaṃ asya kṣāntipāramitā* (It is his perfection in forbearance when his mind does not feel anguish and shows forbearance to persons dismembering his body, and pardons them in order that they may attain emancipation);

(iv) *Yena viryeṇa taṃ sarvajñatāchandaṃ notsrjati, citta-balādhīnāṃ ca pratigrhṇāti, saṃsāram eva cānubadhnāti, kuśalamūlārambham eva cārabhate, iyaṃ asya vīryapāramitā* [It is his perfection in strength that he does not give up his aspiration to attain omniscience and holds fast to it by force of thought, that he follows the course of the world (without attaining Nirvāṇa which he could) and continues collecting merits];

(v) *Yat kāye vikīryamāṇe tat sarvajñatācittotpādaratnaṃ kartuṃ na saṃmuhyati bodhim evāpekṣate śāntaprasāntaṃ eva pratyavekṣate iyaṃ asya dhyānapāramitā* (It is his perfection in meditation that when his body is cut in pieces he does not feel any doubt about the jewel of omniscience and aspires to bodhi calmly and sedately);

(vi) *Yat kāye chidyamāṇe kāyasya tṛṇakāṣṭhakudīyavat pratibhāsoṇamatāṃ pratyavekṣate māyādharmatāṃ ca kāya-syāvatarati, bhūtānityatāṃ bhūtaduḥkhatāṃ ca bhūtānātmatāṃ ca bhūtaśāntatāṃ ca kāyasyopanidhyāyati, iyaṃ asya prajñāpāramitā* (It is his perfection in wisdom that when his body is dismembered he regards it as grass, wood, or wall, or as an image or illusion, and thinks of its real transitoriness, unhappiness, essencelessness and unruffledness)<sup>1</sup>.

It is difficult to say how far these ideas were put into practice, but at any rate, it is apparent from the *avadānas* that they cherished these ideas fervently. In regard to the practice of the *pāramitās*, no distinction was made between a layman and a monk except in matters of ordinary gifts<sup>2</sup>.

#### KARUṆĀ AND MAITRĪ

An important difference between the Hīnayānists and the Mahāyānists in regard to the disciplinary rules consists in the

<sup>1</sup> *Sikṣā.*, p. 187; *Transl.*, p. 182.

<sup>2</sup> See e.g., *Sikṣā.*, p. 144: a monk's *dāna* should be *ekā catuṣ-padikā gāthā*=*Bodhic.*, pp. 143, 144.



great stress laid by the latter upon Karuṇā (compassion) and Maitrī (love). It should not be supposed that the Hīnayānists were totally without them, but they did not emphasise them as much as the Mahāyānists did. These are included in the brahmavihāras, and the Hīnayānic monks are enjoined to practise them among various forms of meditation.<sup>1</sup> In the *Nikāyas* we often come across the following passage in connection with the Brahmavihāras: so mettāsaḥagatena cetasā ekaṃ disaṃ pharitvā viharati. Tathā dutiyaṃ *etc.* sabbāvantamaṃ lokamaṃ mettāsaḥagatena cetasā vipulena mahaggatena appamāṇena averaṇa avyāpajjhena pharitvā viharati<sup>2</sup> (a bhikkhu dwells with his mind full of love towards all beings of all quarters, the love-filled mind being large, profound, immeasurable and free from enmity and hatred). The *Visuddhimagga* dilates on this passage and explains by quotations from the *Vibhaṅga* and the *Paṭisambhidāmagga* that a person is said to practise the mettā-brahmavihāra when he can love all beings of the world as he loves a particular person (*e.g.*, his son). The bhikkhus are expected to develop the feelings of amity (mettā), compassion (karuṇā), joy (muditā) and indifference (upekkhā) towards all beings and wish for their happiness. The Hīnayānists deem it sufficient if the bhikkhus can develop that state of mind, though remaining physically inactive and dwelling in a monastery or forest. But the Mahāyānists look upon karuṇā and maitrī in quite a different light. The *Śikṣāsamuccaya* brings out its importance as a producer of Buddha by the simile of the growth of the foetus in the womb. It says that bodhicitta is the kalala (embryo), kṛpā or karuṇā the arbuda (the 2nd pre-natal stage), maitrī the peśī (the 3rd pre-natal stage), āśaya the ghana (the 4th pre-natal stage). These, developed by bodhi-aṅga, form the Buddha-garbha (mature Buddha-womb<sup>3</sup>). In short, the Mahāyānists insist that mahākaruṇā should be the keynote of all

<sup>1</sup> These are included in the 40 kammaṭṭhānas, see *Vis. M.*, p. 110. In the *Prajñāpāramitās* also, these four brahmavihāras are treated as forms of meditation.

<sup>2</sup> *Dīgha*, III, pp. 223-4; *Sum. Vil.*, pp. 115ff.; *Vis. M.*, p. 111; see Mrs. Rhys Davids' paper "*Divine States of Consciousness*".

<sup>3</sup> *Śikṣā.*, p. 103.



bodhisattva practices<sup>1</sup>. Śāntideva points out in the first *kārikā* of his work

yadā mama pareṣāṃ ca bhayaṃ duḥkhaṃ ca na priyaṃ,  
tadātmanaḥ ko viśeṣo yat taṃ rakṣāmi netaraṃ.

(When fear and pain are disliked by myself as well as others, why should I distinguish myself from others that I should seek protection for myself and not for others.) It is *mahākaruṇā*, i.e., consideration for others' good that pervades the whole conception of bodhisattva practices<sup>2</sup>. This has, we must admit, relaxed to a large extent the rigidity of disciplinary rules, a thing which would never be allowed by the Hīnayānists. *Maitrī* is, in fact, a corollary to *Karuṇā*; it means that a bodhisattva must love all beings as he would love his own son<sup>3</sup>. Though the two expressions are very often mentioned together, it is *mahākaruṇā* that greatly appealed to the minds of the Mahāyānists. At any rate, we cannot but appreciate this ideal of the Mahāyānists, if we take into consideration their philosophy of *Samatā* (equality), for the proper exercises of *mahākaruṇā* and *mahāmaitrī* can really be effective in making the average mind develop gradually the thought of *samatā* (equality or sameness).

#### MAHĀYĀNISTS OBSERVE ŚIKṢĀ-SAMVARAS

Notwithstanding their idealistic philosophy the Mahāyānists did not underestimate the value of the rules of conduct as formulated by the Hīnayānists. It was regarded as a *mūlāpatti* (grave offence) if a bodhisattva dissuaded a person from the observance of the *Prātimokṣa* rules and asked him to read Mahāyāna sūtras<sup>4</sup>, and by mistake if one believed that purity could be attained by reading the Mahāyāna texts without observing the rules of discipline<sup>5</sup>. But again it is sometimes said that the aspiration for *Tathatā* or

<sup>1</sup> *Śikṣā.*, p. 117: yat kiñcid Bhagavan bodhisattvānāṃ kāyakarma yat kiñcit vākkarma yat kiñcit manaskarma tat sarvaṃ sattvāvekṣitam pravartate mahākaruṇādhīpateyam.

<sup>2</sup> *Śikṣā.*, p. 286: Mahākaruṇayā bhagavan bodhisattvānāṃ sarva-buddhadharmāḥ karatalagatā bhavanti.

<sup>3</sup> *Śikṣā.*, p. 19.

<sup>4</sup> *Bodhic.*, pp. 147-8 = *Śikṣā.*, p. 61.

<sup>5</sup> *Bodhic.*, pp. 146, 147.



Śūnyatā or Sarvajñatā absolves one from all sins<sup>1</sup>, and hence the observance of samudācāras is not essential. The significance of such a statement is that a person, who is striving to realise Śūnyatā or Tathatā, endeavours to raise his mind to the height where he cannot find any distinction between positive and negative, between offence and non-offence, vinaya (rules) and avinaya (absence of rules), saṅkleśa (impurities) and vyavadāna (purification). He endeavours to go beyond the realm of vikalpa or saṃvṛti, under which fall the disciplinary rules, whence it appears to him that there is no such thing as samudācāra (rules of conduct); and he can therefore be regarded as free from karmāvaraṇa (obstacles due to action<sup>2</sup>). But this aspiration for śūnyatā<sup>3</sup> cannot be had without going through a certain amount of samudācāra for it is often said that they who say that bodhi can be attained by one means (ekāyāyena) and that means is śūnyatā are foolish. Thus we see that the Mahāyānists felt the need of samudācāra or śikṣāsaṃvara as much as the Hīnayānists, and for this, they drew upon the stock of disciplinary rules of the Hīnayānists as also upon the common heritage of the Indian religious orders.

We have seen that as far as the development of bodhi-citta and the practice of the pāramitās, and maitrī and karuṇā, are concerned, no distinction is made between a grhī bodhisattva and a pravrajita bodhisattva except in regard to a few directions that are necessary for grhī bodhisattvas for performing the duties of a bodhisattva compatible with family life. Though the Mahāyānists approved of the family life of a bodhisattva, they do not, in fact, believe that it is possible for a grhī bodhisattva to attain bodhi by continuing to be a householder. The life of Gautama

<sup>1</sup> *Śikṣā.*, pp. 165, 171-2, 178.

<sup>2</sup> *Śikṣā.*, p. 172; for details of Karmāvaraṇa, see *Śikṣā.*, pp. 90, 98, 99. Cf. *Patañjali-yogasūtra*, iv. 31.

<sup>3</sup> *Śikṣā.*, p. 97: Buddha after saying that he had practised the pāramitās for countless years said, "tat to mohapuruṣā evaṃ vakṣyanti ekaṇāyāyenaiva bodhir yaduta śūnyatānāyāne ti"; p. 117: "kā punar iyaṃ sarvākāraṇāvaropetā śūnyatā? yeyam bodhisattvacaryāyā aparitāyāgenā-bhīṣyamānā abhyastā vā sarvabhāvaśūnyatā"; see also p. 272.



Buddha, always the ideal of the Mahāyānists in regard to the career of a bodhisattva, shows that at the end, a bodhisattva must retire from the household life in order to attain bodhi. In the description of bhūmis, the *Daśabhūmikasūtra* also points out that a bodhisattva in the fifth or sixth bhūmi seeks ordination and retires from the world. Evidently, they recognise that the bodhisattvas should, at a certain time, lead the life of a monk and abide by the rules of *Vinaya*.

#### MAHĀYĀNIC ORDINATION

The *Kriyāsaṅgrahapañjikā*<sup>1</sup>, though a later work, furnishes us with an account of the procedure of ordination that prevailed among the Mahāyānists. It follows the procedure of the Hīnayānists so closely that it seems that the ceremony of ordination remained almost the same among both the Hīnayānists and the Mahāyānists. It runs as follows:—

The Pravrajyā and Upasampadā are to be effected by an Ācārya and Upādhyāya. If any body seeks pravrajyā, he should be first asked about the restrictions (antarāyikān dharmān)<sup>2</sup> and then he is to take triśaraṇa, five śikṣāpadas, and the upāsakasamvaras (the disciplines that a layman can undertake, viz., the 8 śīlas) by uttering thrice the usual Hīnayāna formulæ. Then for ordination he formally entreats the Ācārya and Upādhyāya who consent to ordain him. His head is shaved and he is told that he is now different from a grhī, and is asked whether he is willing to continue to be so. On his answering in the affirmative, he is bathed in the waters of the four oceans<sup>3</sup> and clad in yellow robes, and is asked to utter thrice that he, so-and-so, gives up for his whole life the dress of a householder and adopts that of a monk.

He is now given a new name according to the *nikāya* (school) and with this name he again takes triśaraṇa and the ten śikṣāpadas. He holds a bowl and a robe (pātra-cīvara) and then entreats the Saṅgha to permit him to seek so-and-so

<sup>1</sup> A.S.B. ms., leaf 160a; see H. P. Śāstrī's *Cata. of Sans. Mss.*, vol. 1, pp. 123-6.

<sup>2</sup> I.e. some diseases, permission of parents, etc. See Pāli *Kammavācam*.

<sup>3</sup> Evidently a Tāntric addition.



as Ācārya and so-and-so as Upādhyāya, and promises to make proper use of the bowl and the robe by uttering mantras. The wordings of the *Pañjikā* are slightly different from those of the *Kammavācam* but the form and order of procedure are the same.

DISCIPLINARY RULES COMPILED FROM THE *Śikṣāsamuccaya*:

As the object of the *Śikṣāsamuccaya* is a general treatment of the duties of a Bodhisattva, it does not present us with a systematic disciplinary code for the monks, but in some places it gives a few rules, which must have been taken from a code followed by the Mahāyānists. It says that the duties of a bodhisattva towards others or his duties on the occasion of hearing or preaching the dharma or performing the worship of the Tathāgatas<sup>1</sup> are prescribed in the *Bodhisattva-prātimokṣa*.

(A) KALYĀṆAMITRA

(i) Bodhisattvas should have kalyāṇamitras (spiritual advisers). In the Mahāyāna texts, the kalyāṇamitra plays an important rôle. In the *Prajñāpāramitās* it signifies any person, layman, or monk, who teaches the bodhisattvas that things are transitory, and non-existent in the highest sense, advises them to perform the kuśalamūlas (good deeds), and tries to create in them an interest for Sarvajñatā (omniscience) through Mahāyāna, avoiding Hīnayāna. Those who advised the bodhisattvas to study the Aṅgas (scriptures) and to practise the various dhyānas, apramāṇas, ārūpya-samāpattis and so forth, or in other words, the practices of the Hīnayānists, and dissuaded them from practising the pāramitās and studying the *sūtrāntas*, should be regarded as pāpamitras (evil friends<sup>2</sup>). It is enjoined upon a bodhisattva never to forsake a kalyāṇamitra even at the cost of his life, because the duties to be followed by him are all explained in the *sūtrāntas* which can be learnt only from a kalyāṇamitra<sup>3</sup>. A kalyāṇamitra, according to the *Bodhicaryā-*

<sup>1</sup> *Śikṣā.*, p. 55.

<sup>2</sup> *Sata.*, pp. 937-1041, 1185, 1190; *Pañca.* (ASB. Ms.), leaf 216a.

<sup>3</sup> *Śikṣā.*, p. 41.



*vatāra*<sup>1</sup>, is one who is well versed in the bodhisattvasaṃvara (discipline) and thoroughly knows the Mahāyāna. One should reverently attend upon him for the sake of detailed knowledge (*parijñāna*)<sup>2</sup>. A kalyāṇamitra protects a bodhisattva from falling into evil courses (*durgati*), doing improper deeds, frequenting pleasure resorts and so forth. He also brings him out of the worldly life<sup>3</sup>. The bodhisattvas in their turn should approach the kalyāṇamitra with a firm and tranquil mind, ready to obey him and carry out his wishes, however difficult they may be, just as a dutiful son would do to his father and a patient to his physician, taking his instructions as medicines, and the consequent attainments as the cure of diseases<sup>4</sup>. The *Śikṣāsamuccaya* also quotes many texts about the duties of a kalyāṇamitra and his disciple<sup>5</sup>. According to it, a person, who teaches even a gāthā of four pādas, is a kalyāṇamitra<sup>6</sup>; hence a dharmabhāṇaka is a kalyāṇamitra. Thus we see that a kalyāṇamitra is a very wide term and includes both Ācārya and Upādhyāya. Though we do not come across the actual rules observed by the kalyāṇamitra and his antevāsika (disciple) as we get in the *Vinaya* of the Hīnayānists, we may infer from the above description of the duties of a kalyāṇamitra and his disciple that the texts have in view the Hīnayānic rules of conduct. The term is also found in use in the later Pāli texts. In the *Visuddhimagga*, Buddhaghosa uses it in the sense of both Ācariya and Upajjhāya, and even calls Buddha a sabbākārasampanno kalyāṇamitta, (a perfect friend or spiritual adviser<sup>7</sup>). He also points out that kalyāṇamitta is a kammaṭṭhanadāyaka (prescriber of the basis of meditation), which is really the function of an Ācariya.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Bodhic.*, p. 157.

<sup>2</sup> *Bodhic.*, p. 157.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 157; *Śikṣā.*, p. 35: *niṣkāsayitāraḥ saṃsārapurāt*. This is similar to the function of an Ācariya.

<sup>4</sup> *Bodhic.*, p. 158.

<sup>5</sup> See e.g. *Śikṣā.*, pp. 34-6.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 37.

<sup>7</sup> *Vis. M.*, pp. 121, 98; also pp. 89, 98, 99. Kalyāṇamitta is used in a general sense in the *Maṅgalasutta* and the *Samyutta*, I, p. 88.

<sup>8</sup> For the duties of the Ācariya and the Upajjhāya, see *Cv.*, VIII, 12-14.



## (B) VAIYĀVṚTYA-BHIKṢU

(ii) The functions of a Vaiyāvṛtya bhikṣu (*i.e.*, a monk who has taken upon himself the responsibility of serving the Saṅgha) correspond to those of the Senāsanapaññāpaka (arranger of seats, beds, etc.) and Bhattudesaka (distributor of food) of the *Suttavibhaṅga*<sup>1</sup>. The account of the functions of the Senāsanapaññāpaka and Bhattudesaka is confined to matters relating to the distribution of seats, beds and articles of food to the monks. The quotation in the *Śikṣāsamuccaya* touches on many topics and is interesting from the view-point of the functions of the secretary of a religious organization. It says that the primary aim of a Vaiyāvṛtya bhikṣu should be to win the approval of the Saṅgha. He should do every act, however small it may be, with the consent of the Saṅgha. He must see to the needs of monks, who are āraṇyakas (leading a forest life), piṇḍacārikas<sup>2</sup> (living on alms under some restrictions), yogācārins (meditating)<sup>3</sup>, bāhuśrutyas (seekers of wide learning), dharmakathikas (preachers of the law) or are suffering from illness. He should keep separate the money or business relating to the saṅgha of a particular locality and that of the saṅghas of the four regions (cāturdiśa) of all times.<sup>4</sup> He must apply the gifts made specially for a stūpa to the use of the stūpa and not to any other purpose. He must not lose his temper or give improper directions. He must render account of the gifts received by him from faithful devotees

<sup>1</sup> *Vinaya*, II, pp. 74-5; III, pp. 158ff.; *Suttavibhaṅga*, VIII: Dabba after attaining arhathood wishes "kin nu kho ahaṃ saṃghassa veyyāvaccam kareyyan ti—yam nunāham saṃghassa senāsanañ ca paññāpeyyam bhattāni ca uddiseyyan ti".

<sup>2</sup> *Cullavagga*, VIII. 5, p. 215: piṇḍacārikā bhikkhū.

<sup>3</sup> These three refer to those monks who are observing one of the dhutaṅga precepts. In the *Vinaya Piṭaka* also, there are rules regarding the service to be rendered to, or by, a monk who is an ārañṇaka. See *Vinaya Piṭaka*, Indexes, II, p. 343, V, p. 244, sv. Ārañṇaka.

Cf. *Vinaya*, II, pp. 75, 176; Dabba Mallaputta arranged seats and beds according as the monks were bahussutas, dhammakathikas, etc.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Āgatānāgata-cātuddisasāṅgha in *Cullavagga*, VI. 1. 4, 9. 1. In the inscriptions also, gifts are found to be made to a particular saṅgha or the saṅghas of the four regions, see *ante*, p. 14.



at proper time and place.<sup>1</sup> This account is followed by a list of the punishments that will be meted out to him in his future births for the breach, or improper discharge, of his duties.

### (C) DRESS

(iii) A monk ordained in the name of Buddha is to put on yellow robes and shave his head and chin. However immoral or sinful he may be, he is immune from injury, punishment, or reproach from unordained persons including a king, because in some ways at least he renders good to the world of the gods and men<sup>2</sup>.

The coloured garments, shaven head and the alms bowl are calculated to destroy his pride<sup>3</sup>. In order to be free from pride, he remembers that he is like a young caṇḍāla, living on alms, receiving what is cast away by others, and that he is to respect his teacher, please his fellow monks by proper conduct, and so forth<sup>4</sup>.

(iv) A bhikṣu needs dress for decency as also to protect his body from gnats and such other insects, but he cannot have more than three pieces<sup>5</sup>. If anybody asks from him the bowl or a robe and if he has not got any to spare, he cannot part with those he has, for they are necessary for him for leading the life of a brahmacārin<sup>6</sup>. The yellow robe of a monk is the sign of a śramaṇa and an object of worship to the gods, men, and demons. These are to be worn by monks free from all worldly ties, and as aids to the performance of duties leading to salvation<sup>7</sup>.

### (D) FOOD

(v) For self-preservation, a bodhisattva needs dress and food<sup>8</sup>. He should collect food just as much as he needs.

<sup>1</sup> *Sikṣā.*, pp. 55-6.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 68: The yellow robe should be regarded as a mokṣa-dhvaja (banner of freedom); see also p. 115.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 150.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 150-1.

<sup>5</sup> *Bodhic.*, p. 141.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 142: avisarjanīyaṃ hi tricīvaram uktam tathāgatena. Cf. *Vinaya, Mv.*, VIII. 13. 3; *Nissaggiya Pāc.*, 1 ff.

<sup>7</sup> *Sikṣā.*, p. 136.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 127. These two are called Satatabhaiṣajya, and medicines are called glānapratyayabhaiṣajya., Cf. *Bodhic.*, p. 140.



While going on rounds, he should avoid unseemly places<sup>1</sup>. Of the food he collects, he should put aside one portion for his brother monks, two for the poor and the afflicted and keep the fourth for himself. This portion he takes without attachment, greediness, and setting his mind to it<sup>2</sup>. He takes it simply with a view to support and maintain his body so that he may not be emaciated.

While going on his round, he must not attend to pleasant or unpleasant things. With senses well controlled, seeing not more than a yoke's length in front, he should proceed from one house to another in regular succession<sup>3</sup>, without being elated if he gets alms, or down-hearted if he is refused. He should visit only ten houses and not more; if even then he fails to get alms, he should not be sorry. On the other hand, he should think that people are busy with their own affairs and it is so much to the good that they merely notice him, even if they do not give him alms. He should have maitrī and karuṇā for all persons he comes across, and wish them good fortune. After collecting alms, he should offer a portion to the poor if he can find any; if not, he should set apart a share for the poor as yet unseen. Then he is to sit crosslegged according to the practice of ascetics, and take his food, wishing that by the food taken by him the 80,000 worms of the body may live and be happy. If he has only very small food, he should think that it will keep his body and mind light and that he would be better fit for exertion<sup>4</sup>. If he receives an abundant dole, he must be moderate in his food and leave the excess upon a rock for birds and beasts.

He must not enjoy the taste of food and so forth. He is to be pure in mind and body, but not in his food, for he should be conscious of the fact that food turns ultimately into filth. He must not mind the kind of food, *i.e.*, whether it is good or bad, or the persons who give it to him, *i.e.*, whether the giver is man or woman, boy or girl. He should give no

<sup>1</sup> *Sikṣā.*, p. 116.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Mtu.*, I, p. 139.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *Sapadānam* (*i.e.* paṭipāṭiyā) piṇḍāya carati.

<sup>4</sup> *Sikṣā.*, pp. 128ff; *Bodhic.*, pp. 140ff.



thought to the fact of being treated with respect or otherwise, served slowly or quickly. In this way, he should avoid all possible evil thoughts (akuśala-manasikāra).

As a craving for food leads one to hell, a bhikṣu must not have desire for flavour (rasatṛṣṇā) of food and must eat it bearing in mind that he takes food to support his body in order to follow the right path.

Should rain prevent him from going on his rounds, he should remain without food for two or three days, remembering all the while that there are creatures in Yamaloka and other evil places who do not get food for years, and so he must not have weakness in body and mind but must patiently endure hunger and thirst.

If any family offers him food, pure according to the Mahāyānic restrictions, he is to take his seat and deliver a discourse on religion; and if the food be not pure he is to rise from his seat and depart. A piṇḍacārika bhikṣu must not make comments on the food received, or indulge in any sort of useless talk. He must be always indifferent to what he gets.

A bhikṣu may accept an invitation at a woman's place if thereby he can benefit himself or anybody else<sup>1</sup>.

When begging or eating food, a monk should remember the giver, the worms in the body, and the dharma, which causes the good of all beings<sup>2</sup>.

These are the various restrictions, which a monk should observe for his satatabhaiṣajya<sup>3</sup>. But in any case, he cannot eat fish or flesh prohibited in the *Laṅkāvatāra sūtra*<sup>4</sup> and other sūtras. The *Śikṣāsamuccaya* quotes many sūtras<sup>5</sup> where fish and meat-eating are condemned, and refers to the three restrictions (trikoṭipariśuddha) observed by the Hīnayānists<sup>6</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Contrast *Pāc.* 44-46.

<sup>2</sup> *Śikṣā.*, p. 138.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 127-131.

<sup>4</sup> See *Laṅkā.*, pp. 244ff.

<sup>5</sup> *Śikṣā.*, pp. 131ff.

<sup>6</sup> On this topic, see Watters' *Yuan Chwang*, I, pp. 55f. *Vinaya*, I, p. 238: trikoṭipariśuddham macchamamsam adiṭṭham asutam apari-saṅkitaṁ ti; *Vinaya*, II, p. 197: Devadatta's demand that macchamamsam na khādeyya; *Śikṣā.*, p. 135n: tad uddiśya hataṁ svahataṁ



(vi) In the *Bhikṣuvīnaya*, medicines are prescribed for the sick for a yāma (three hours), for a week, or for one's whole life<sup>1</sup>. The Mahāyānic *Vinaya* ordains the use of ghee or oil, juice of roots, or fruits as medicaments for the preservation of the body, which is necessary for the salvation of all beings<sup>2</sup>.

(E) VĀCIKA

(vii) A bodhisattva should reside in a place suitable for him. He should speak in season, be cognisant of time and place, so that people may not find any occasion to be displeased with his conduct.

(viii) He should speak gently and not volubly. He should not frequent the societies of laymen, but should be fond of solitude. He should maintain a cheerful countenance<sup>3</sup>.

(ix) He should not talk aloud<sup>4</sup>.

(x) He should not indulge in "despondent, disconnected, frivolous or dramatic talk"<sup>5</sup>. In short, he should not do anything that might displease others, and every action of his should be tempered by mahākaruṇā and the desire of doing good to all beings<sup>6</sup>.

(F) KĀYIKA

(xi) On land or water meant for use, he should not answer the calls of nature<sup>7</sup>.

(xii) He should not use a toothpick, nor drop phlegm before teachers, as a mark of respect.

(xiii) He should not at the time of eating fill his mouth, make a noise, or open his mouth wide<sup>8</sup>.

hanymānaṃ dṛṣṭaṃ; De Groot, *op. cit.*, p. 42. See also Prof. La Vallée Poussin's remarks in the *Foreword*.

<sup>1</sup> *Bodhic.*, p. 141.

<sup>2</sup> *Sīkṣā.*, p. 135; cf. *Vinaya, Mahāvagga*, VI ff, for diseases and medicines.

<sup>3</sup> *Bodhic.*, p. 132; *Sad. P.*, p. 265.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *Sekhiya*, 13.

<sup>5</sup> *Sīkṣā.*, p. 126.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 127: saṅkṣepatas tu paraprasādarakṣā. Cf. *Bodhic.*, p. 149; *Sīkṣā.*, p. 117.

<sup>7</sup> *Sīkṣā.*, p. 125; *Transl.*, p. 124; *Bodhic.*, p. 148; Cf. *Bhikkhupāti-mokkha*, *Sekhiya*, 73, 74; *Bhikkhunīvibhaṅga*, *Pāc.* 8, 9.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. *Sekhiya*, 39, 50, 51.



(xiv) He should not be unrestrained in hand and foot<sup>1</sup>, “sit with dangling legs<sup>2</sup>”, and rub hands.

(G) DHUTAVĀDINS

(xv) If an abhyavakāśika monk (living in an unsheltered place) falls ill, he should reside in a monastery without having any attachment to the monastery or making it his home, and wishing good to the giver of the monastery.

(xvi) An āraṇyaka monk (*i.e.*, living in a forest) in choosing his place of residence should pay heed to the facts (*a*) that it is not very far from or near to a place wherefrom alms are to be collected, (*b*) that pure water is easily available for drinking, (*c*) that there are trees with leaves, flowers, fruits as also caves, cliffs and quiet places, and (*d*) that there are no wild animals in the locality<sup>3</sup>.

(xvii) Should an āraṇyaka bhikṣu desire to hear the dharma or see his ācārya or upādhyāya or consult physicians about some illness or have śayanāsana in a village, he should come and go only in the evening<sup>4</sup>.

(H) ATONEMENT

(xviii) A bhikṣu should atone for his sins in four ways :

(*a*) Vidūṣana-samudācāra = repentance and self-reproach by mentally entreating the various Buddhas to forgive him for the sins committed by him<sup>5</sup>. It includes confession resorted to by Buddhist monks generally ;

(*b*) Pratipakṣa-samudācāra = performing some good deeds, which counteract the evils committed by him ;

(*c*) Pratyāpattibala = adopting the duty to observe

<sup>1</sup> *Sīkṣā.*, p. 116.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Sekhiya*, 15, 16.

<sup>3</sup> *Sīkṣā.*, pp. 196-7. This is followed by an account of the mental state that an āraṇyaka bhikṣu should possess.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 200. It is to be noted that the rules relating to the begging of alms, use of medicines, etc. were the few special rules observed by the followers of the dhutaṅga precepts particularly Āraṇyakas, Piṇḍapātikas, Śmāśānikas, Paścādbhaktikas and Abhyavakāśikas. See *Sīkṣā.*, pp. 131, 135, 137; *Pañca.* (ASB. ms.), leaf 218b, 284 for dhutaṅgas. See also De Groot, *op. cit.*, pp. 69f for some other rules.

<sup>5</sup> For formulæ, see *Bodhic.*, p. 154.



saṃvaras (disciplinary checks) and not committing evils any more; and

(d) Āśrayabala = taking refuge in Buddha, Dharma, and Saṅgha and developing bodhicitta.

#### (I) ĀPATTIS

In the *Upāliparipṛcchā*, the light and serious offences (āpatti) are distinguished in detail. The āpattis may be broadly divided into two classes :

(i) Those committed through hatred (dveṣasahagata). They are considered serious in view of the fact that they indicate a bodhisattva having a mind full of aversion (parityāga) towards beings. A bodhisattva is to confess his sins falling under this head before a chapter of ten monks.

(ii) Those committed through attachment (rāga). These are not serious, and even sometimes may be regarded as anāpattis (non-offence) in view of the fact that they indicate the bodhisattva's favourable attitude towards other beings. A bodhisattva is to confess offences falling under this head before a chapter of five monks.

The *Śikṣāsamuccaya* mentions a few other āpattis, viz., stryāpatti, dārikāpatti, hastāpatti, stūpāpatti and saṅghāpatti (i.e., offences relating to women, girls, *hasta*, stūpa and saṅgha), but it does not give details about the nature of their commission and confession <sup>1</sup>.

Except for a little Mahāyāna colouring here and there, the above rules of discipline are apparently derived from those of the Hīnayānists.

#### (J) ĀPATTIS PECULIAR TO MAHĀYĀNA

To form an idea of the nature of the disciplinary rules made specially by the Mahāyānists, we shall mention here some of the offences, which are considered serious (mūlāpatti) by them. A bodhisattva should not

(i) preach the deeper teachings of Mahāyāna to a person not competent to grasp them and thus frighten him away from the higher teachings and resort to śrāvakayāna;

<sup>1</sup> *Śikṣā.*, pp. 160 ; 164, 168, 169 ; *Bodhic.*, pp. 153-4. See *ante*, p. 306.



(ii) discourage persons from practising the pāramitās and ask them to take to śrāvakayāna;

(iii) dissuade persons from observance of *Prātimokṣa* rules and advise them to read only the Mahāyāna texts;

(iv) disparage Śrāvakayāna and advise persons to give it up, or praise Mahāyāna and ask people to take to it in order to attain bodhi;

(v) show disrespect to Śrāvakayāna and Pratyekabuddhayāna;

(vi) read, teach or preach Mahāyāna for the sake of gain and honour; speak ill of others or show some supernatural powers with a view to lessen the gain of others and increase his own;

(vii) be proud of one's own learning of Mahāyāna texts and imparting the same to others; or boast of his learning or his compassion to his hearers;

(viii) be proud of the gifts received from one's admirers;

(ix) be instrumental in punishing bhikṣus and compelling them to commit offences against the saṅgha;

(x) give out false doctrines and thereby taint the morals of the bhikṣus and thus discredit them in the eye of the householders<sup>1</sup>;

(xi) reproach a gr̥hī- or pravrajita-bodhisattva for any āpatti;

(xii) show disrespect to a bodhisattva;

(xiii) show displeasure at a bodhisattva's enjoying the five pleasures of the senses;

(xiv) cause mental or physical pain to a bodhisattva;

(xv) address an unkind word to a bodhisattva;

(xvi) fail to honour a bodhisattva thrice in the day and thrice at night;

(xvii) fail to give away kingship, wealth or body for the completion of the resolution formed by him;

(xviii) hesitate to dwell with a person as low as a caṇḍāla;

(xix) praise oneself and disparage others;

(xx) stop at a place to avoid quarrels, etc.;

<sup>1</sup> *Sīkṣā.*, pp. 60 ff; *Bodhic.*, pp. 160 ff. It is also pointed out (*Sīkṣā.*, p. 64; *Bodhic.*, p. 163) that a bodhisattva can absolve himself from all these sins by simply worshipping Ākāśagarbha Bodhisattva.



(xxi) profess himself as an observer of dhutaṅgas or śīlas, or as one vastly learned ;

(xxii) give out his good points and conceal the bad <sup>1</sup> ;

(xxiii) fail to examine his own self ;

(xxiv) wish the company of persons with little learning ;

(xxv) be fond of assemblies ;

(xxvi) fail to reside in solitary places and practise self-control ;

(xxvii) hanker after gain and honour, frivolous talk, sleep, slumber and so forth ; and

(xxviii) fail to serve or praise the Tathāgatas.

These rules are more like pious advice than a code of discipline meant for the bodhisattvas. They lack a system and have in view only the ideal life, which a Bodhisattva should lead.

<sup>1</sup> For these and such other rules, see *Sikṣā.*, pp. 98, 104, 105, 148, 309, 274.





## APPENDIX

### A Note on the *Prajñāpāramitā*

It need not be pointed out how great is the importance of the *Prajñāpāramitās* in the history of the Buddhist literature and how much the history of the origin and development of Mahāyānism depends on them. From the large number of works on *Prajñāpāramitās* existing in Sanskrit, Chinese and Tibetan, a list of which is to be found in Nanjio's *Catalogue of the Chinese Buddhist Tripitaka* and Walleser's *Die Vollkommenheit der Erkenntnis*, it is apparent that at a certain stage of Buddhism the *Prajñāpāramitās* were considered by the Buddhists the most holy and the most valuable of all works. Nāgārjuna considered it worth while to undertake the task of writing a commentary on one of them while Asaṅga and many others devoted much time and energy to comprehend the philosophy embedded in them.

#### THE EARLIEST *Prajñāpāramitā*

The dates of Chinese translations of the various *Prajñāpāramitās* help us very little in ascertaining which of them is the oldest; nor is the theory, which is so often launched by scholars, that the more concise a book the earlier it is, of much consequence in regard to this class of literature. The earliest Chinese translation, we are told, was made of the *Daśasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā* by Lokarakṣa about 148 A.D.<sup>1</sup> Curiously enough this particular version of the *Prajñāpāramitā* was not known to the Sanskritists. The *Mahāvvyutpatti*<sup>2</sup> mentions six of them without referring to it while

<sup>1</sup> Nanjio's restoration of the name *Daśasāhasrikā*, it seems, was made from the Tibetan name *Ses-rab-kyi-pha-rol-tu-phyin-pa-khri-pa* (10,000), for, there is nothing in the Chinese title to indicate that it is *Daśa*. and not *Aṣṭa*. or any other *Prajñāpāramitā*. Again, Nanjio points out that this *Daśa*. was the same as *Aṣṭa*.

<sup>2</sup> *Mvyut*. 65 mentions *Satasāhasrikā*, *Pañcaviṃśatisā*°, *Aṣṭasā*°, *Pañcaśatikā*, *Trisatikā* and *Saptaśatikā*.



Bendall, R. L. Mitra, and H. P. Śāstrī catalogued many manuscripts on Prajñāpāramitā but did not come across any of the *Daśasāhasrikā*. Besides these facts it should also be noted that Śāntideva or the author of the *Laṅkāvatāra* had occasions to refer to the *Śata*. and the *Aṣṭa*. but never to the *Daśa*.<sup>1</sup> The only explanation that can be offered for this silence of the Sanskritists is that either this *Prajñāpāramitā* is of non-Indian origin or is only a version of the well-known *Aṣṭa*. Profs. Nanjio<sup>2</sup>, Walleser and a few other scholars prefer the latter view on account of the fact that the Chinese version of the *Daśa*. follows more or less that of the *Aṣṭa*. But then again the question arises, why in the Chinese collection there should be versions of the *Aṣṭa*. too? A very close study of the various Chinese versions may yield some definite results but the names of chapters as given in the Chinese versions help us very little, specially in view of the fact that the titles of chapters were mostly invented by the Chinese translators and were not translations of the titles of the Sanskrit originals.<sup>3</sup>

If we are to rely on the Tibetan traditions, we should regard the *Aṣṭa*. as the oldest, for it was the first *Prajñāpāramitā* preached by Maitreya.<sup>4</sup> Adding to this the opinion of Profs. Nanjio and Walleser about the identity of the *Daśa*. and the *Aṣṭa*., it would not be wide of the mark to hold that the *Aṣṭa*. was the oldest. The Nepalese tradition, however, makes it to be the latest abridgment made from the original *Prajñāpāramitā*, which extended over a hundred and twenty-five thousand ślokaś,<sup>5</sup> the earliest abridgment being the *Śata*. followed by the *Pañcaviṃśati*. and the *Aṣṭa*.

We might have made a better approach to the truth if we had known the text upon which Nāgārjuna commented and

<sup>1</sup> Henceforth *Śata*., *Daśa*., and *Aṣṭa*. will be used for referring to the *Śatasāhasrikā*, *Daśasāhasrikā* and *Aṣṭasāhasrikā*.

<sup>2</sup> Nanjio, *Catalogue*, p. 3(d).

<sup>3</sup> *E.g.* in the Sanskrit original of the *Śatasāhasrikā* the chapters are indicated by numbers only without any name but the Chinese version gives the names of chapters. Evidently the names were chosen so as to indicate the subject-matter of the chapter.

<sup>4</sup> *Tāra*., p. 58.

<sup>5</sup> Mitra, *Intro. to the Aṣṭa*., p. iv.



produced his famous *Mahāprajñāpāramitāśāstra*. Rosenberg informs us that the text used by Nāgārjuna was the *Pañcaviṃśati*., but he does not indicate his source of information.<sup>1</sup> A view current in Japan at the present moment is that Nāgārjuna's Śāstra was written upon the *Prajñāpāramitā* called 大明度經 (Ta-ming-tu-ching)<sup>2</sup>. According to Nan-jio's information this is a version of the *Aṣṭa*. or *Daśa*., at least the fact that the *Ta-ming-tu-ching* contains also thirty chapters like some of the versions of the *Aṣṭa*. and *Daśa*. points towards the probability of its being a translation of a version of the *Aṣṭa*. but on comparison we see that this text does not literally follow the present Sanskrit text. Besides, the number of chapters in the Sanskrit original is thirty-two while that in the Chinese is thirty and so if it be a translation of the *Aṣṭa*. it must be of another version of the same.

#### INTERNAL EVIDENCES: (I) CONCEPTION OF TRIKĀYA

There are also internal evidences which throw light on the antiquity of the *Aṣṭa*. and its priority to the *Śata*. and the *Pañcaviṃśati*. They are mainly the conceptions of Sambhogakāya and the ten bhūmis.

It has been shown before<sup>3</sup> that the Yogācārins were responsible for the Trikāya conception and that Nāgārjuna in his *Mahāprajñāpāramitāśāstra* spoke only of two kāyas, viz., rūpa and dharma kāyas, and not sambhogakāya. The Sambhogakāya is expressly mentioned in the recast version<sup>4</sup> of the *Pañcaviṃśati*. but the nature of its description shows

<sup>1</sup> Rosenberg, *Die Probleme der buddhistischen Philosophie*, p. 273. Rosenberg's statement is not based on any authority. This tradition is also recorded by Przyluski (see *I. H. Q.*, vol. V, p. 2).

<sup>2</sup> Forming no. 135 of the Taisho edition, vol. VII, pp. 475ff. It was translated by Chi-Chien of the Wu dynasty (222-280). The Japanese view was communicated to me by Prof. E. Tomomatsu.

<sup>3</sup> See *ante*, Ch. III (b), pp. 96, 97, 114.

<sup>4</sup> The extant Sanskrit Mss. of the *Pañcaviṃśati*. do not represent the original *Pañcaviṃśati*., from which the Chinese and Tibetan (bkaḥ-hgyur) translations were made. For detailed reasons see my *Intro.* to the *Pañcaviṃśati*.



that its Sambhogakāya (=embodiment of Bodhipakṣika and other pure dharmas) corresponded to the Dharmakāya of the early Mahāyānists, and Svasambhogakāya of the later Yogācārins. Now the question arises, when did this conception of Sambhogakāya come into vogue? The first definite conception of it appears in the *Laṅkāvatāra* where the name given to it is not Sambhogakāya but Niṣyanda- or Dharmatā-niṣyanda-Buddha<sup>1</sup>. The *Laṅkāvatāra* is not a very early treatise and is undoubtedly later than the *Śatasāhasrikā*, to which it refers by name<sup>2</sup>. In the *Śata.*, the term Niṣyanda-kāya or Sambhogakāya does not appear but there is the graphic description of Śākyamuni's Sambhogakāya, which is called there Prakṛtyātmabhāva or Āsecanakakāya<sup>3</sup>. This description of the Āsecanakakāya serves as a prelude (nidāna) to the discourse on the *Prajñāpāramitā*. The *Pañcaviṃśati* follows the *Śata.* almost word by word in this description, and therefore needs no separate comment. The *Gaṇḍavyūha* surpassed the *Prajñāpāramitās* in its description of the Buddhakāya, and it seems that imagination could not be let loose further than what the compiler of the *Gaṇḍavyūha* has done. The description of the Āsecanakakāya appears in the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka* as well but it is more guarded and less imaginative. It is striking that this description of the refulgent body of Buddha, throwing its rays of light all over the universe and making every being happy, is absent in the *Aṣṭa.* The *Aṣṭa.* starts directly with the topic of the *Prajñāpāramitā*, which has been taken up by the *Śata.* in its second and fourth chapters<sup>4</sup>. The silence of the *Aṣṭa.* about the refulgent kāya of Buddha is clearly indicative of its being earlier than the *Śata.*, *Pañcaviṃśati.*, *Gaṇḍavyūha*, etc., and was the production of a time when the Sambhogakāya or Āsecanakakāya had not yet been conceived of.

<sup>1</sup> See *ante*, Ch. III (b), p. 120.

<sup>2</sup> *Laṅkā.*, p. 8.

<sup>3</sup> See *ante*, Ch. III (b), pp. 118-9.

<sup>4</sup> E.g. *Śata.*, p. 504 = *Aṣṭa.*, p. 7

„ p. 324 = „ p. 4.



## (II) CONCEPTION OF DAŚABHŪMI

Another internal evidence, proving the greater antiquity of *Aṣṭa*, is its conception of Bhūmis. We have seen that in the evolution of the Bhūmi conception, the *Mahāvastu* represents the earliest stage, the *Śata*, and the *Pañcaviṃśati*, the middle, and the *Daśabhūmikasūtra* and other works the latest<sup>1</sup>. The *Aṣṭa* does not refer to the Bhūmis at all. Objection may be taken to such negative evidences, but if the *Aṣṭa* and the *Śata* be compared, it will be found that the evidence, though negative, is strong enough to prove our contention. The account of the Bhūmis occurs in the tenth chapter of the *Śata*, in which the topic has been introduced by the line: Kathaṃ bodhisattvo mahāyāna-samprasthito bhavati (how a bodhisattva is regarded as having started on the great way?)<sup>2</sup>. This is preceded by an elaborate answer to the question, "What is Mahāyāna?"<sup>3</sup>, giving opportunity to the *Śata* to dilate on all the practices, which a bodhisattva is expected to accomplish. The chapter that follows the account of the Bhūmis deals with the metaphysical interpretation of Mahāyāna, which is identified there with the highest truth, the Śūnyatā, and compared to Ākāśa<sup>4</sup>. The *Aṣṭa* answers the question as to who is Mahāyāna-samprasthita by one word: pāramitābhiḥ samprasthitaḥ (started by practice of the pāramitās). This is preceded by a brief answer to the question "What is Mahāyāna?" and followed by the remarks about the metaphysical aspect of Mahāyāna without any reference to the Bhūmis. It may be contended that the *Aṣṭa*, for the sake of abridgment omitted many topics and the account of the Bhūmis was one of them. An objection like this cannot be answered except by a further negative evidence. It is a common practice with the *Prajñāpāramitās* to enumerate all the various practices and even stages of sanctification of a Śrāvaka, Pratyekabuddha or Bodhisattva and show that they are non-existing or that Bodhisattvas remain dissociated from them or that they are only dreams but taken as real by the dreaming masses. None of the *Prajñāpāra-*

<sup>1</sup> See *supra*, Ch. IV.<sup>2</sup> *Śata*, p. 1454 = *Aṣṭa*, p. 23.<sup>3</sup> *Śata*, p. 1405 = *Aṣṭa*, p. 23.<sup>4</sup> *Śata*, p. 1530 = *Aṣṭa*, p. 24.



*mitās* mention these Mahāyānic bhūmis though they speak of the Hīnayānic stages of sanctification<sup>1</sup> in such enumerations. This strengthens our position that the conception of Bhūmis was not known to the early Mahāyānists and that they were invented later on and incorporated in the larger *Prajñāpāramitās*, leaving untouched the older enumeration of Śrāvakabhūmis<sup>2</sup>.

By such internal evidences it can be definitely stated that the *Aṣṭa*. preceded the *Śata*. and the *Pañcaviṃśati*. as well as the *Laṅkāvatāra*, *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka*, *Gaṇḍavyūha* and *Daśabhūmikasūtra*. By means of these tests of the conceptions of Sambhogakāya and Bhūmi, we may thus arrange the texts chronologically,—

(1) *Aṣṭa*. and *Daśa*.,

(2) *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka*, *Śata*., and *Pañcaviṃśati*. (recast version),

(3) *Gaṇḍavyūha* and *Laṅkāvatāra*, and

(4) *Daśabhūmikasūtra*.

The earliest Chinese translation of the *Daśabhūmikasūtra* was made by Dharmarakṣa in the third century A.C. proving the existence of the Sūtra itself in the second century. Two centuries may well be allowed for the evolution of these conceptions of the Sambhogakāya and the Bhūmis, and the expansions of the *Prajñāpāramitās*. We may therefore hold that the *Aṣṭa*. or the *Daśa*. was in existence towards the end of the first century B.C.

#### RELATION AMONG THE VARIOUS *Prajñāpāramitās*

It is generally believed,—there is also a tradition to this effect,—that there has been a gradual abridgment of the original *Prajñāpāramitā* and this has given rise to the various treatises called the *Śatasāhasrikā*, *Pañcaviṃśatisā°*, *Aṣṭādaśasā°*, *Daśasā°*, *Aṣṭasā°*, *Saptasatikā*, *Ardhasatikā*, ending with *Ekākṣarī*. Strictly speaking all these *Prajñāpāramitās* excepting the first three or four are not really abridgments of the larger ones but are independent works devised and written by different compilers at different times. The main

<sup>1</sup> See *ante*, Ch. IV, p. 241.

<sup>2</sup> See *Śata*., p. 1473.



theme of all the works is, of course, the same, viz., the establishment of the new Śūnyatā philosophy, and the assertion that the Truth can be realised through the practice of the prajñāpāramitā only. There are many extraneous matters, which have been discussed incidentally in the larger *Prajñāpāramitās* and passed over in the smaller ones, e.g., the sense of the 18 śūnyatās, 118 samādhis, the various cakṣus, the bodhipakṣikadharmas. It seems to me that the larger *Prajñāpāramitās* are not merely unnecessary expansions of the smaller ones, and that it is perhaps an exaggeration to say that the *Vajracchedikā* is an abridgment of the *Śata.*, or the *Ekākṣarī* gives all that a *Prajñāpāramitā* can give.

And then as against the tradition that the smaller *Prajñāpāramitās* are abridgments of the larger ones, a view is current among modern oriental scholars that the truth lies in the opposite direction. Dr. Tucci is an advocate of this view. In his introduction to the *Saptaśatikā*, he says "Save rare exceptions, bigger compilations do nothing but expand in an emphasizing way those fundamental concepts, which constitute the kernel of *Prajñāpāramitā*. Those fundamental concepts are to be found more succinctly and without excessive repetitions in shorter manuals. The *Saptaśatikā* goes immediately into the core of the subject-matter and without so many repetitions expounds in one dialogue the theme, the interlocutors being Buddha, Mañjuśrī and Śāradvatīputra"<sup>1</sup>. Prof. Tucci overlooks the fact that the *Saptaśatikā* touches the fringe of a wide range of topics discussed in the other *Prajñāpāramitās* and cannot be taken as giving the gist of a large *Prajñāpāramitā*. To carry to the extreme his line of thought we may say in one word that Śūnyatā is the teaching of the *Prajñāpāramitās* and it contains the gist of the whole literature. The view which Tucci endorses is really the outcome of the critical study of the brahmanic literature. It has been found that in some cases the brahmanical works were originally short and

<sup>1</sup> *Saptaśatikā Prajñāpāramitā* (Memorie della R. Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei), 1923, vol. xvii, fasc. iii.



simple, and in course of time they became voluminous by glosses or philosophical interpretations. The Buddhist literature stands on quite a different footing, and what may be true for the brahmanic literature is not necessarily true for the buddhist. In the latter case we find that the language of the older texts is simpler although they are more verbose and full of repetitions, while the later texts are concise, less verbose, and have fewer repetitions. Again, the voluminousness of the earlier *Prajñāpāramitās* was due to repetitions and not to glosses and philosophical interpretations. Hence the relation between the smaller and the larger *Prajñāpāramitās* should be ascertained by an independent enquiry and not by any general theory. It can only be possible when we have the *Prajñāpāramitās* in handy editions. So, for the present, we must confine ourselves to a comparison of the *Aṣṭa.*, 12 (out of the 72) chapters of the *Śata.* and the recast version of the *Pañcaviṃśati.*, which is in the course of publication.<sup>1</sup> The relation between the *Aṣṭa.* and the *Śata.* can be hardly called that of abridgment or expansion as it can be said between the *Śata.* and the *Pañcaviṃśati.* The *Aṣṭa.* does not contain a word about the glorious Buddhakāya and other matters of the Nidāna. It starts directly with the question as to the propriety of Subhūti in teaching Mahāyāna, a topic taken up in the second chapter of the *Śata.*<sup>2</sup> In the first chapter, the *Aṣṭa.* discusses when a bodhisattva is to be regarded as mahāsan-nāhasannaddhaḥ (well-armoured), which is treated in the seventh chapter of the *Śata.*<sup>3</sup> Then the question "What is Mahāyāna?" is answered at the very beginning of the *Aṣṭa.* while it is taken up in the eleventh chapter of the *Śata.*<sup>4</sup> Instances of agreement, sometimes verbal, like those mentioned above can be multiplied to show that the *Aṣṭa.* and the *Śata.* deal with identical topics, but the arrangement and the emphasis

<sup>1</sup> There is another *Prajñāpāramitā* published first by Prof. Leumann (Schriften der wissenschaftlichen Gesellschaft in Strassburg, 1912) and then by Messrs. H. Izumi and S. Toganov (Kyoto, 1917) called *Prajñāpāramitā-nayaśatapañcāstika.*

<sup>2</sup> *Aṣṭa.*, p. 4 = *Śata.*, ch. II.

<sup>3</sup> „ p. 23 = „ p. 1405.

<sup>4</sup> *Aṣṭa.*, p. 24 = *Śata.*, p. 1530.



laid on a particular topic are quite different. Besides this, the *Śata.* introduced new topics like bhūmis and expositions of the various sūnyatās, samādhis, etc.,<sup>1</sup> which were only enumerated or referred to in the *Aṣṭa.* So it may be said that the *Śata.* utilised the *Aṣṭa.* and not *vice versa.* Again, some of the *Prajñāpāramitās* were evidently abridged from the *Śata.* The *Pañcaviṃśati.* is clearly an abridgment of the *Śata.* effected by an omission of set enumerations and repetitions by the use of words, such as yāvad, peyyālam or by sometimes mentioning only the positives in full without the negatives. In short, the *Pañcaviṃśati.* tried to preserve the original with the utmost accuracy.

Very recently a fragment of a *Prajñāpāramitā* manuscript (48 leaves) found in Central Asia has been published in the *Memoirs of the Archæological Survey of India* (No. 32). The editor, Mr. Bidyabinod, believes on the evidence of the Upright Gupta characters used in it, that the fragments belong to a date earlier than 580 A.C. He has also shown that the subject-matter and phraseology of the fragment resemble those of the *Śata.* and that the portion contains a slightly shorter version of chapters vii-xi of the latter. The fragment contains the sections on the interpretation of the Pāramitās, Sūnyatās, Samādhis and the Bodhipakṣika dharmas and closely follows the corresponding passages of the *Pañcaviṃśati.*, having slight difference like dharmebhyaḥ for dharmaiḥ, or bāhya for bahirdhāḥ. The fragment might be regarded as a copy of the original *Pañcaviṃśati.* but the portions found in it are so very common that it is difficult to say definitely that it is a copy of the *Pañcaviṃśati.* and not of the *Aṣṭādaśa.* or any other work. It can, however, be said that it is not a copy of the *Śata.*, for in some places the abridgments have been made on the lines of the *Pañcaviṃśati.* In Ceylon also some inscriptions have been discovered recently, containing fragments of the *Prajñāpāramitā.*<sup>2</sup> They correspond to the nidāna-section of the *Śata.* and the *Pañcaviṃśati.*; the agreements though quite close

<sup>1</sup> See, e.g. *Śata.*, Ch. VIII ff.

<sup>2</sup> *Ceylon Journal of Science*, II.



cannot be called literal. So it seems they are taken from a recension of either the *Pañcaviṃśati*. or the *Aṣṭādaśa*.

The comparison of the *Śata*., *Pañcaviṃśati*. and *Aṣṭa*. confirms our contention that the generalisations regarding abridgment and expansion of the *Prajñāpāramitās* are not possible and that each book must be judged by its contents. If we consider the *Saptaśatikā*, which is supposed to be older than the expanded ones, we notice that the interlocutors are Mañjuśrī and Śāriputra, and not Subhūti and Śāriputra, the most common figures of the very early Mahāyāna treatises. There is a class of literature like the *Gaṇḍavyūha*, in which Mañjuśrī plays the chief rôle, and so it may be that this *Prajñāpāramitā* was the production of a class of devotees who held Mañjuśrī in great veneration. The mention of the Nirālamba-bhaginī, i.e., concretisation of an abstract idea, hints rather at its posteriority than priority to the larger *Prajñāpāramitās*.

#### NATURE OF THE REPETITIONS

We shall now proceed to form an idea of the nature of the repetitions resorted to in the *Prajñāpāramitās* and the reasons therefor. In these days, when so much attention is given to the conservation of time and energy, one is apt to get weary of repetitions, and particularly of the mechanical repetitions, which are so often found in the *Prajñāpāramitās*. Writers on philosophical subjects very naturally ring the changes on the theme that they desire to establish; but so long as they do it skilfully, and without tiring their readers there can be little objection to their enthusiasm. One notices these repetitions in the most modern of philosophical works of the west and the east, as well as in the masterly Buddhist works of Nāgārjuna and Asaṅga. For the fulfilment of its object a new philosophical work is necessarily burdened with the unpleasant and arduous task of first wiping out from the minds of its readers several old ideas, some of them deep-rooted, in order to implant new ideas in their places. Again, to deepen the impression it has to revert to its topic over again in different ways and lead its readers unconsciously to the new



point of view. The early Buddhist literature, specially the *Prajñāpāramitās*, sadly lacked the knowledge of artful repetitions and consequently it is tiresome. Compared with the great philosophical works produced in India before or about the time of the *Prajñāpāramitās*, the *Prajñāpāramitās* are conspicuously lacking in philosophical precision and phraseology, deficiencies which it tried to remedy by repetitions. For instance, when it endeavours to establish the thesis that everything is *śūnya* (non-existent), a doubt may be left in the mind of the reader whether the Tathāgata or the Asaṃskṛtadhātus like the Ākāśa or Nirvāṇa are excluded or included, so the *Prajñāpāramitās* have punctiliously mentioned that each of them whether Tathāgata, Nirvāṇa or Ākāśa, even the various *Śūnyatās*, are *śūnya* in the sense that Cakṣu or Cakṣuviññāna is *śūnya*. A modern reader can certainly complain of this defect in view of the immense literature that he has to wade through within a short space of time but the writers of the *Prajñāpāramitās* had at their disposal ample time and patience to read and write works like these.

The *Prajñāpāramitās* also like all other philosophical works had to eradicate many of the old deep-rooted ideas. They directed their attention mainly to their predecessors, the Hīnayānists. The Hīnayānists, as is well known, had already enjoyed a long lease of life and developed a fair amount of literature on their doctrines, the classification of dharmas, psychological analyses, etc. The *Prajñāpāramitās* took the most popular of these doctrines and disciplines, and tried to show that from the new point of view, which the *Prajñāpāramitās* set out to inculcate, they were all to be treated as mere names having no existence whatsoever. To give an illustration: They preach that a bodhisattva while practising the *prajñāpāramitā* does not consider himself attached or unattached to any (mentioning each and every one) of the 5 skandhas, 6 indriyas, 6 āyatana, 6 viññānas, 4 mahābhūtas, 12 links of the pratītyasamutpāda, 6 pāramitās, 18 śūnyatās, 37 bodhipakṣikadharmas, apramāṇas, samādhis, samāpattis, āvenikadharmas, balas, vaiśāradyas, phalas, tathatā, ātman, sukha, nirvāṇa, and so forth.



They repeated the same list over again to maintain that each of them was not bodhisattva or that each of them was not different from bodhisattva. In short, the *Prajñāpāramitās* in order to establish Śūnyatā have shown that there is nothing in the world of our knowledge which has any real existence. Everything that we are conscious of has only dreamy existence, and that all the 84,000 dharmaskandhas supposed to have been preached by Buddha are only expedients (upāyakaśālya) adopted by him for the benefit of ignorant and deluded beings, and consequently a bodhisattva while practising the *prajñāpāramitā* should treat them as mere apparitions devoid of reality.

#### FUNCTION OF PRAJÑĀPĀRAMITĀ

The function of the *prajñāpāramitā* is to make a bodhisattva bear in mind that the *pāramitās*, *samādhis*, *sāmapattis*, *phalas* or *bodhipakṣikadharmas*, which he has been practising, are only aids and expedients invented by Buddhas to help beings to the realisation of the ideal. Unlike the other *pāramitās*, the *prajñāpāramitā* is not to be practised. It is really a state of mind to be acquired by the help of the six *pāramitās* and the various Buddhistic practices. A bodhisattva may perfect himself in the *dānapāramitā*, but as there is every possibility of his forming a conception of the *dānapāramitā* as having a sort of existence (*svabhāva*), it may become for him an object of grasping (*grāhya*). He may also have a conception of the giver and the receiver and the thing given. It is to counteract all these conceptions, which are really misconceptions, that the *prajñāpāramitā* steps in and makes the bodhisattva try to develop a state of mind in which the *dānapāramitā* would appear to him as devoid of signs (*alakṣaṇa*), without any independent existence of its own, and at the same time eliminate from his mind any conception regarding the giver, the receiver or the thing given. In short, the function of the *prajñāpāramitā* is to convince a bodhisattva that the *dānapāramitā* or whatever it may be is really formless, baseless and is indistinguishable from *śūnyatā*. It serves as a guard to the bodhisattva, who has risen much above the average and



acquired various meritorious qualities, but still may cling to some idea or concept which in itself may be highly pure and meritorious, but being an attachment must be got rid of. It is for this reason that the prajñāpāramitā has been extolled over all other pāramitās or virtues, and has been designated as the chief (nāyikā, pūrvaṅgamā) of all pāramitās.<sup>1</sup> The *Aṣṭasāhasrikā*<sup>2</sup> compares the prajñāpāramitā to the earth, on which all the other pāramitās rest, grow and produce the fruit of sarvajñatā (omniscience), and hence it is the producer of the Sarvajñas, the Tathāgatas.

<sup>1</sup> *Aṣṭa.*, pp. 80, 81.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*









## TABLE OF ABBREVIATIONS

- A.=Aṭṭhakathā  
 Aṅguttara=Aṅguttara Nikāya (P.T.S.)  
 Aṣṭa.=Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā (A.S.B.)  
 As. Res.=Asiatic Researches  
 Attha.=Atthasālinī  
 Ava. Ś.=Avadāna Śataka (Bibliotheca Buddhica)  
 B. Bh.=Bodhisattva Bhūmi (edited by J. Rahder as an  
 Appendix to the Daśabhūmikasūtra)  
 B.E.F.E.O.=Bulletin de l'École Française d'Extrême-  
 Orient  
 Bodhic.=Bodhicaryāvatāra (A.S.B.)  
 B. Phil.=Buddhist Philosophy by A. B. Keith  
 B.T.S.=Buddhist Text Society, Calcutta  
 Buddhismus etc.=Der Buddhismus, seine Dogmen, Ges-  
 chichte und Litteratur by B. Wassilief  
 Cal. Rev.=Calcutta Review  
 Catena etc.=A Catena of Buddhist Scriptures by S. Beal  
 Comp. of Phil.=Compendium of Philosophy (translation of  
 the Abhidhammatthasaṅgaha—P.T.S.)  
 Catalogue=A Catalogue of the Chinese translations of  
 the Buddhist Tripiṭaka by B. Nanjio  
 Con. of N.=Conception of Nirvāṇa by Th. Stcherbatsky  
 Corpus=Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum by Hultzsch (1925)  
 Cv.=Cullaṅkavagga of the Vinaya Piṭaka  
 Cy.=Commentary  
 Daśa.=Daśabhūmikasūtra ed. by J. Rahder  
 Dh. P.=Dhammapada  
 Dh. S.=Dhammasaṅgaṇi (P.T.S.)  
 Divyā.=Divyāvadāna (Cowell's ed.)  
 Der individualistische etc.=Der individualistische Idea-  
 lismus der Yogācāra-schule by J. Masuda  
 Dīgha=Dīgha Nikāya (P.T.S.)  
 Early History etc.=Early History of the Spread of  
 Buddhism and Buddhist Schools by N. Dutt  
 E.B.=Eastern Buddhist (Japan)



- Ep. Ind.** = *Epigraphia Indica*  
**E.R.E.** = *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*  
**Geschichte, etc.** = *Geschichte der indischen Litteratur* (vol. II) by M. Winternitz  
**Handbook etc.** = Eitel's *Handbook of Chinese Buddhism*  
**I.H.Q.** = *Indian Historical Quarterly* (Calcutta)  
**Intro.** = Burnouf's *Introduction à l'histoire du Bouddhisme indien*  
**Ind. Ant. (or I. A.)** = *Indian Antiquary*  
**Ind. Phil.** = *Indian Philosophy*  
**Itiv.** = *Itivuttaka* (P.T.S.)  
**J.A.** = *Journal Asiatique*  
**J.A.S.B.** = *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*  
**J.P.T.S.** = *Journal of the Pāli Text Society*  
**J.R.A.S.** = *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*  
**Jāt.** = *Jātaka* (Fausböll's edition)  
**Kārikā** = *Abhisamayālaṅkārikā* (Bibl. Buddhica)  
**Kāś. P.** = *Kāśyapa Parivarta* ed. by Holstein  
**Kośa** = *Abhidharmakośa* (Fr. Transl. by L. de la Vallée Poussin)  
**Kośavyākhyā** = *Abhidharmakośavyākhyā*, pt. i (Bibl. Buddhica)  
**Kvu.** = *Kathāvatthu* (P.T.S.)  
**Laṅkā.** = *Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra* ed. by B. Nanjio  
**Lal. Vis.** = *Lalita Vistara* (Lefmann's edition)  
**List** = Lüder's *List of Brahmi Inscriptions* (Ep. Ind., vol. x)  
**Lotus etc.** = *La Lotus de la Bonne Loi*, Burnouf's Fr. Transl. of the *Saddharma Puṇḍarīka*, 1925  
**M. Ava.** = *Madhyamakāvatāra* (Fr. Transl. in *Le Muséon*)  
**Majjhima** = *Majjhima Nikāya* (P.T.S.)  
**Manual etc.** = *Manual of Indian Buddhism* by H. Kern  
**Manuscript Remains etc.** = *Manuscript Remains of Buddhist Literature found in Eastern Turkestan* by A. F. Rudolf Hoernle  
**Mil.** = *Milindapañha* (Trenckner's edition).  
**Masuda.** See *Origin etc.*  
**Mtu.** = *Mahāvastu* (Senart's ed.)  
**Mv.** = *Mahāvagga* of the *Vinaya Piṭaka*  
**M. Vr.** = *Madhyamaka Vṛtti* (Bibl. Buddhica)



- Mvyut.=Mahāvyutpatti (Bibl. Buddhica)  
 Nep. B. Lit.=Nepalese Buddhist Literature by R. L. Mitra  
 Netti.=Nettippakaraṇa (P.T.S.)  
 Origin etc.=Masuda's Origin and Doctrines of Early Indian Buddhist Schools (Asia Major, II)  
 Pañca. or Pañcaviṃśati=Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā (A.S.B. or Cambridge ms.)  
 Paṭis. M.=Paṭisambhidāmagga (P.T.S.)  
 Pug. P. or P.P.=Puggala Paññatti (P.T.S.)  
 Puṇḍarīka. See Sad. P.  
 Sad. P.=Saddharma Puṇḍarīka (Bibl. Buddhica)  
 Sad. Saṅ.=Saddhamma Saṅgaha (J.P.T.S., 1890)  
 Saṃyutta=Saṃyutta Nikāya (P.T.S.)  
 Śata.=Śatasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā (A.S.B.)  
 Siddhi.=Viññaptimātratāsiddhi ed. by Sylvain Lévi  
 Śikṣā.=Śikṣāsamuccaya (Bibl. Buddhica)  
 Studies etc.=Studies in Indian History and Culture by N. N. Law  
 Sum. Vil.=Sumaṅgala Vilāsinī (Supplement to I.H.Q.) ed. by N. Dutt  
 Sūtrā.=Sūtrālaṅkāra ed. by Sylvain Lévi  
 Systems etc.=Systems of Buddhistic Thought by Yamakami Sogen (Calcutta University)  
 Tāra.=Tāranātha's Geschichte des Buddhismus in Indien by A. Schiefner, 1869  
 Triṃśikā. See Siddhi  
 Ud.=Udāna (P.T.S.)  
 Vibh.=Vibhaṅga (P.T.S.)  
 Vis. M.=Visuddhimagga (P.T.S.)  
 Z.D.M.G.=Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft







## LIST OF PĀLI AND SANSKRIT WORDS \*

- Aggasāvaka*, the foremost disciple, 75  
*Agrabodhi*, the highest knowledge, 93, 113  
*Āṅga*, division of the Buddhist scriptures  
*Advaya*, non-duality  
*Advaidhīkāra*, inseparability, indivisibility  
*Adhicitta*, higher mental practices  
*Adhipaññā*, higher practices for insight into the Truth  
*Adhimukti*, aspiration, 85, 243  
*Adhiśīla*, higher practices relating to control of body  
*Adhiṣṭhāna* (*adhiṭṭhana*), resolution, 12, 280  
*Anātman* (*anattan*), the doctrine that every being is constituted of vanishing elements and hence is without any permanent substance as soul  
*Anābhoga*, not requiring power or exertion, i.e., spontaneous, self-created (Tib. lhun-grub), 273, 280  
*Anitya* (*anicca*), the doctrine that things of the world are transitory, impermanent  
*Animitta*, signless and baseless, 94, 131f, 172, 191, 273  
*Animitta-vimokṣa-mukha*, mental dissociation from the things of the world by meditating that they are baseless and signless, 274  
*Anupādāya*, without attachment  
*Anuśaya*, dormant passions, desires, 30, 177, 263  
*Anusmṛti*, constant remembrance, 304  
*Apratiṣṭhita* (*apatitṭhita*), footingless  
*Apraṇihita* (*appaṇihita*) -*vimokṣa-mukha*, mental dissociation from the things of the world through meditation devoid of all desires, 94, 274, 132  
*Apramāṇa*, immeasurable, it usually refers to the four *brahma-vihāras* (q.v.), or to powers and attainments of Buddhas  
*Abhiññā* (*abhiññā*), the six supernormal powers attained by arhats, 168, 266

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\* Words appearing in the Index or only once in the text with their English rendering have been omitted here.



- Abhinirhāra*, resolution to achieve something, 284  
*Abhiniveśa*, adherence to a dogma, 250 ; occupied with  
*Abhisamaya*, comprehension, full knowledge  
*Ariyapuggala*, persons on the way to salvation  
*Avyākṛta* (*avyākata*), indeterminable, unmanifest  
*Aśūnya*, real, non-relative  
*Aśaikṣa* (*asekha*), arhats who have nothing more to learn  
*Aṣṭāṅgikamārga* (*aṭṭhaṅgikamagga*), the eightfold path, i.e., the eight kinds of practices prescribed for the attainment of emancipation  
*Asamsāra*, transcendental  
*Asamskrta*, unconstituted  
*Ādikarmika*, beginner  
*Āpatti*, breaches of the monastic laws, hence, any offence  
*Āyatana*, spheres ; sources or planes of the origin of senses (Tib. *skye-mched*)  
*Āryasatya*, the fourfold truth, or the fourfold method of analysis followed by the Buddhists for examining worldly things  
*Ālambana* (*ārammaṇa*), basis, support  
*Ālaya-vijñāna*, the store-consciousness, the substratum of *samsāra*  
*Āveṇika-dharma*, it refers to the eighteen qualities which a bodhisattva acquires without any flaw (cf. Tib. *chos-ma-ḥdres-pa*)  
*Āśaya*, mental disposition, intention  
*Āśraya*, substratum, support  
*Āsrava* (*Āsava*), (four) impurities  
*Indriya*, organs of sense, faculty, power  
*Upāya*, expedient, means  
*Upanissaya*, previous merits, 173, 248  
*Upādāna*, substratum of future births due to attachment to four wrong ideas  
*Ṛddhi* (*iddhi*), supernatural powers  
*Karma*, action  
*Kalpanā*, imagination, thought-construction, net of fancies  
*Ruṣalamūla*, merits acquired through good actions



*Kleśa* (*kilesa*), impurities, passions, afflictions, defiling elements

*Kṣīṇāsrava*, arhats who are free from impurities

*Gotra*, a category of beings having a certain degree of religious aspiration, 55, 84f

*Caryā*, practice, conduct

*Citta* = *manas* = *manovijñāna*, mind, thought

*Caitta*, mental functions

*Chanda*, intention ; strong

*Jhāna* (*dhyāna*), trances

*Tathatā*, thatness, *i.e.*, the Mahāyānic principle that things in reality remain the same and is without origin and destruction

*Duḥkha* (*dukkha*), the doctrine that existence in any of the various worlds, or attachment to the things of the world is associated with pain, misery and so forth

*Drṣṭi* (*ditṭhi*), view : *samyak*, right, and *mithyā*, wrong

*Dveṣa* (*dosa*), hatred

*Dharma* (*dhamma*), truth, doctrine, existent things and conditions, nature of things, qualities acquired by an adept, discourses

*Dharmatā* = *Tathatā* (q.v.)

*Dhātu*, elements, worlds, *viz.*, *kāma*, *rūpa*, and *arūpa*, sometimes also *apariyāpanna* or *lokottara* ; also relics

*Dhāraṇī*, the twelve qualities which firmly uphold a bodhisattva (Tib. *gzuns* ; Chi. 絕持 = *chueh-ch' ih*), 282

*Nāman*, sign, name, 234n.

*Nāmarūpa*, usually translated as “name and form” ; *nāma* denotes four of the five *khandhas*, *viz.*, *vedanā*, *saññā*, *saṅkhārā* and *viññāṇa*, while *rūpa* denotes only the material aggregates of a body (*rūpakkhanda*)

*Nimitta*, sign, basis, 131, 232, 234n

*Nirnimitta*, signless, baseless

*Nirodha*, cessation ; the third truth that *duḥkha* can be ended

*Nisprapañca*, inexpressible

*Nairātmya*, non-existence of soul (*ātman*), want of substance in both *Pudgala* (individual) and *Dharma* (things of the world)



*Pakatisāvaka*, a common disciple

*Paramārtha*, the highest truth

*Paryavasthānas*, pervading passions, 27n, 30

*Pāramitā*, the six or ten virtues which a bodhisattva must completely acquire before he can become a Buddha

*Pudgala* (*Puggala*), soul, individual

*Prajñapti*, description, communication

*Prajñā*, knowledge ; intellectual exercises for obtaining insight into the truth

*Pratigha* (*Paṭigha*), repugnance

*Pratītyasamutpāda*, the theory that all things originate out of some causes and conditions. It is usually translated as "Law of Causation", "Causal Law", and recently as "Theory of relative existence"

*Pratibhāna*, readiness in speech, self-confidence in speech

*Pratisamkhyā*, knowledge

*Pratisamvid* (*paṭisambhidā*), understanding (Tib. so-so-yañ-dag-par-rig-pa), analysis ; (for detailed treatment see *Points of the Controversy*, pp. 377–382). It is of four kinds : artha, dharma, nirukti and pratibhāna, 277, 283

*Prapañca*, describing a thing which is indescribable, hence a mere thought-construction ; looking upon unity as manifold, 125, 187, 192, 197f., 213f

*Phala*, Hīnayānic fruits or stages of sanctification

*Bala*, powers, qualities

*Buddhakṣetra*, it refers to the belief that every Buddha presides over a world of beings, 67n, 89, 121

*Bodhicitta*, the resolution made by an adept to become a Buddha ; it is of two kinds, (i) Bodhipraṇidhi and (ii) Bodhiprasthāna, 247

*Bodhipakṣika* (*bodhipakkkhika* or *bodhipakkhiya*) *dharma*, the 37 qualities which an adept is to attain for full enlightenment, 4, 33, 91, 107, 246, 270

*Brahmavihāra*, meditation induced by altruistic concepts, 267, 308

*Bhāva*, existence

*Bhāvanā*, dwelling on something constantly *i.e.*, repeated *darśana*



*Bhūtakoti*, limit or end of existence (Tib. yod-pa-ñid-kyi-mthah, also yañ-dag-pa-ñid-kyi-mthah—*dharmadhātu*)

*Bhūmi*, stages of sanctification

*Mārga*, (i) the eightfold path, see *aṣṭāṅgikamārga*; (ii) the four of the eight Hīnayānic stages of sanctification

*Moha*, delusion

*Yāna*, vehicle, or path which leads an adept to liberation

*Rāga*, passion, attachment

*Rūpa*, material aggregates of a body; form

*Lakṣaṇa*, percept, properties, characteristics

*Lokadhātu*, a sphere, a unit of the universe

*Vāsanā*, unconscious impression left by past actions, 197n., 234

*Vasitā*, control acquired by a Bodhisattva over his mind, requisite length of life, action, birth, aspiration, doctrines, resolution, miraculous powers, and knowledge, 117, 281

*Vikalpa*, thought-construction

*Vimokṣa*, liberation, release; it usually refers to the three meditations induced by *śūnyatā*, *animitta* and *apraṇihita*, (q.v.) 160, 274

*Vimukti*, emancipation, liberation, deliverance

*Vaiśāradya* (*vesārajja*), four acquisitions which make Buddhas fearless, 75, 85, 108, 247, 281

*Vicikitsā* (*vicikicchā*), perplexity, doubt about the efficacy of following the Buddhist dharma

*Vihāra* (*bhūmi*), stages of sanctification

*Vipassanā*, deep vision, insight (Tib. lhag-then)

*Vyāpāda*, hatred, ill-will

*Śamatha*, quietude, an absolute inexcitability of mind (Tib. shi-gnas)

*Śaraṇa*, taking refuge in the three ratnas, Buddha, Dharma and Saṅgha

*Śāśvatavāda*, eternalism, 87, 170

*Śikṣāpada*, set of precepts, 311

*Śīlavrataparāmarśa*, taint due to belief in the efficacy of rites and ceremonial observances

*Śūnya*, devoid of attributes, non-existent



*Śūnyatā*, the Absolute which is devoid of all attributes

*Śraddhā*, reverential faith

*Śrāvaka* (*sāvaka*), usually it means disciples; the Mahāyānists, however, refer by this term to the Hīnayānists because the latter are initiated into the Truth by hearing discourses from Buddhas and their disciples

*Sakkāyadṛṣṭi* (*sakkāyaditṭhi*), belief in the existence of one's own individuality

*Samatā*, the sameness of things of the world in reality, *i.e.*, things are without origination and destruction, not to speak of their distinctions

*Samādhi*, concentration

*Samāpatti*, the eight trances, *i.e.*, including the four jhānas

*Samudaya*, origin, it usually refers to the origin of misery or sufferings of the world, 49, 82, 227

*Samudācāra*, conduct, set of precepts, 310

*Samgrahavastu*, elements of popularity

*Samvara*, discipline

*Samvṛti*, conventional truth, as distinguished from *Paramārtha* (q.v.)

*Samyojana*, (ten) fetters, tying a being to the world

*Samsāra*, world, existence, 46, 82, 94

*Skandha* (*khandha*), (i) the five constituents of a being, *rūpa* (material aggregates), *vedanā* (feeling), *saṃjñā* (perception) *saṃskāra* (impressions) and *viññāna* (consciousness), 117, 136, 142, 163, 201-202

(ii) five groups of acquirements, *viz.*, *śīla*, *saṃādhi*, *prajñā*, *vimukti* and *vimuktijñānadarśana*, 104, 108

*Samskrta*, constituted

*Smṛtyupasthāna* (*satipaṭṭhāna*), intent contemplation and mindfulness, 108, 230, 236

*Svabhāva*, existence, reality

*Sāmānya*, general



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